

A  
YEAR OF  
JAPANESE  
EPIGRAMS

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# A YEAR OF JAPANESE EPIGRAMS

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HENRY FROWDE  
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS  
LONDON, NEW YORK, TORONTO AND MELBOURNE

1911



A REFLECTION OF MOUNT FUGUI.

## INTRODUCTION

PERHAPS it would not be far wrong to say that the Japanese are the most poetical nation in the world. From their earliest school-days children are taught the conventional rules for composing verse; and, having in addition all the inherited knowledge and poetic appreciation handed down from past generations, it is not surprising to find that verses are composed and jotted down upon all occasions and on all subjects. Poetry is in the air; poetical parties take the place of our bridge drives; picnics are given, when the guests are invited to view some specially fine flowering trees and are expected to compose verses, which are then written down upon narrow slips of paper and attached to the branches; and each January a National Poetical Contest, called *Uta-awase*, takes place, when each one in the land, from the highest to the lowest, is allowed to send in a verse on a special subject chosen by the Emperor. The results are carefully sorted out, classified, and finally reduced to the few best, which are then read out in public and published in the newspapers.

Verses are to be found on pictures, screens, china, fans, towels, handkerchiefs, &c.; most newspapers and magazines publish more or less poetry; the people sing while at work, and compose verses in joy or sorrow, health or sickness, and by day or, when unable to sleep, by night; I have even known



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a Japanese student produce verses in the unromantic smoke of a North of England manufacturing town.

The oldest and most classical metre is the *tanka*, a five-lined verse of thirty-one syllables, and for many years this was the only kind of poetry known in Japan. But in the fifteenth or sixteenth century a kind of literary pastime came into fashion, called *Renga*; one person composed the first three lines of a *tanka* verse, and the other players had to extemporize a suitable last couplet, or *vice versa*. From this arose the custom of composing a complete verse in three lines only, consisting of seventeen syllables, 5-7-5, which was called *haikai*, *haiku*, or *hokku*.

Most people will be inclined to think that no real poetry can be written within such a narrow compass; for each *hokku* is complete in itself, it does not stand merely as one verse in a longer poem. But that is just where the skill of the *hokku* writer comes in. The nation that can produce those miracles of Lilliputian carvings and paintings, which can only be appreciated by the aid of a magnifying-glass, and complete little landscape gardens with fishponds and growing trees within the space of a small tea-tray, are adepts at this sort of thing. In fact the Japanese mind runs naturally to the minute, to a tiny jewel polished to perfection, and they revel in the conciseness and compression of a *hokku* verse. The writer in a few striking words strives to convey the suggestion of an idea or the outlines of a picture against a background of mist, and the reader is left to fill in the details for himself. Indeed, the *hokku* writer does in verse what the artist does with his suggestive brush-work, sketching in a few strokes, hinting at his meaning, and leaving the rest to imagination.

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## INTRODUCTION

Thousands of *hokku* are composed every year, and numbers of collections of verses are published, generally classified according to the seasons of the year to which they belong; for there are conventional rules to govern this. For instance, *ohara* (dusk) must only appear under mid-spring, *yûdachi* (a shower) belongs to late summer, and *meigetsu* (full moon) to mid-autumn. Few love-poems are to be found among *hokku*; they are generally written in *tanka* or the modern *dôdô-itsu*, which has four lines and twenty-six syllables. Occasionally a more or less humorous verse is met with, but the great mass of them are written about flowers, insects, birds, the moon, the seasons, festivals, &c.

But the best description I can give of these little verses is to quote what the great Japanese scholars of the day have said about them. Dr. W. G. Aston, C.M.G., says of *haikai* verses, 'There is in them a perfection of apt phrase, which often enshrines minute but genuine pearls of true sentiment or pretty fancy. Specks even of wisdom and piety may sometimes be discovered upon close scrutiny.' Prof. B. H. Chamberlain calls them 'the tiniest of vignettes, a sketch in barest outline, the suggestion, not the description, of a scene or circumstance, a little dab of colour, thrown upon a canvas one inch square, where the spectator is left to guess at the picture as best he may.' And again, 'a momentary flash, a smile half formed, a sigh suppressed almost before it becomes audible.' And Mr. F. V. Dickinson, C.B., says, 'They suggest rather than state a thought or fancy, and often require a world of explanation to be intelligible. They are titles of unwritten poems rather than themselves poems. But, when understood, they are found to contain, or at least to suggest,

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## INTRODUCTION

an incredible amount of meaning within the narrowest compass of language.'

The verses which follow are all *hokku*, and are taken with very few exceptions from the following four Japanese Collections, *Haiku Ichi Man* (One Myriad Haiku), and *Haikai Kosen Shinsen* (Ancient and Modern Selections of Haikai) published by Mr. T. Nunami of Tōkyō, who also specially composed and sent me the verse signed with his literary name Kci-on, which appears on the first page; also *Hokku Teishōki*, (Handbook of Hokku) and *Kokon Hokku Tō-kagami* (A Distant Reflection of Ancient and Modern Hokku), published by Mr. Shōbei Okamura of Tōkyō; both of these gentlemen have kindly given me permission to make use of their Collections.

It will be noticed that nearly all these verses, even in their English form, describe some little picture which could be painted—often merely the outlines, which leave much to the reader's imagination. What could give one a more delightful picture of a peaceful autumn morning in Japan than Bashō's little gem which I have put down for Sept. 26? 'Translated literally it runs, 'An early morning breeze? Yes, and a single goose up in the white clouds, nothing more.' Not a verb in the whole verse, nothing but a couple of light touches of the brush, and the sketch is complete. In this respect Mr. Ishibashi's delicate little pictures are particularly successful, and give a much better translation of the original than pages of English could do.

Lafadio Hearn said that English translations of Japanese verses are only as pressed and dried flowers compared to the live blossoms of the original, and I cannot hope to reproduce

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anything of their charm and vividness; I am but too conscious of the inadequacy of my translation, and shall be quite satisfied if I can succeed in giving a general impression of the way the Japanese mind looks at the beauties of Nature, sees little details which quite escape us, and embodies his ideas in verse—ideas which the reader will see are very different from the thoughts that would occur under similar circumstances to a European.

Many of these verses contain double meanings and plays upon words, which cannot be rendered into English, and the meaning is often dependent upon the place or circumstances in which the verse was composed, which it is not always easy to ascertain. For example, the verse I have put down for May 7, if translated literally, reads, 'The grasses of summer? A vestige of the soldiers' dreams'; which conveys little sense, until we know that Bashō wrote this on the scene of a great historical battle, long grown over with grass.

This is a typical instance of the concentrated and compressed form of *haikai*. As Dr. Aston says, 'A very large proportion of Bashō's *haikai* are so obscurely allusive as to transcend the comprehension of the uninitiated foreigner'; and Prof. Chamberlain alludes to them as 'epigrams which continually cross the borderland of obscurity'. Perhaps I may add that several verses have puzzled even educated Japanese, to whom I have applied for guidance.

Some of the verses I have selected may appear to a Japanese as very poor specimens of their country's poetry; I would not for a moment suggest that they are all good, although the Collection includes many by the very best writers; I can only plead that they appeared to me to be the ones best adapted for translation into English out of more than 2,500 that I have



## INTRODUCTION

read. The merit of a verse to a Japanese often lies in a particular word or phrase, or in the order of the words, niceties which are quite lost in translation; and Lafcadio Hearn even went so far as to say that scarcely two or three in every one hundred *hokku* verses would bear translation.

In my version I have ventured to add one syllable to each line, which makes the verse sound better to an English ear, and also leaves a little more room to express the meaning. Even then, however, I have often been obliged to avail myself of the heading to help out the meaning of the original.

In reading the Japanese the vowels have the continental sound, and the consonants are pronounced as in English, except that 'g' in the middle of a word is sounded as if it were 'ng'; every syllable, whether a single vowel or a vowel preceded by a consonant, must be sounded separately; there are no silent letters and no diphthongs, and a long vowel is lengthened out as if it were two syllables. Where a consonant occurs at the end of a syllable, as in the final 'n' of the future tense or in the occasional Chinese words, it is pronounced as a complete syllable.

It will be noticed that sometimes a verse does not scan properly, as it has too many syllables; in this case a Japanese would slur over the defect in reciting it, and explain that the musical part of the verse is not of so much importance as the idea expressed. It is in fact a case of poetic licence. A notable instance will be found in the second line of Bashō's verse which I have put down for Oct. 8.

The three coloured pictures have been specially painted by Mr. Ishibashi; the frontispiece represents a reflection of Mount Fuji in the water, and the single wild goose is in-

## INTRODUCTION

tended to suggest the season of autumn, when the atmosphere is always sufficiently clear from mist to show the reflection. Of the other two pictures, one is 'Plums blossoming in the moonlight with snow on the ground', a conventional poetical combination; and the other is a view of Mount Fuji from Miho no Matsubara, the scene of the well-known Nō opera *Hogoromo* or Feather Robe.

Most of the information in connexion with the verses and their writers I have gathered from Prof. Chamberlain's *Things Japanese*, an exhaustive paper read before the Asiatic Society of Japan on *Bashō and the Japanese Epigram* by the same author, Dr. Aston's *Japanese Literature*, and the charming works of the late Lafcadio Hearn. My thanks are also due to Mr. S. Uchigasaki and Mr. C. Fujino for their advice and assistance in many difficulties. The latter especially has transliterated for me nearly all the names of the writers of the verses. These names, which are *hainyō* or *noms de plume* and not the real names of the writers, require a special study of their own to pronounce properly. Ladies' names are generally written in phonetics, which are easily read; but the others are written in two or more ideographic characters, each of which can be pronounced in two or more different ways according to their Chinese or Japanese sound, and nothing but long experience can make sure of their correct pronunciation. Many of the less well-known names puzzle the Japanese themselves, and they will tell you that they may be read either in one way or another. At the end will be found some notes on Bashō, the greatest of all *hokku* writers, and a few of the better-known poets, and such notes on the verses as seemed to be necessary to elucidate their meaning.



Aki kaze ya  
Hai ki yoko tō  
Nami ban ri.  
KEI-ON

A book of verse for thee,  
Blown by the autumn breezes o'er  
Ten thousand miles of sea.

# JANUARY

## [LATE WINTER]

### *New Year's Day*

Jan. 1

Tori no koyo  
Hana aru katae  
Shi-hô-hai.

Let birds and blossoms pay  
Due homage to the Emperor  
Upon each New Year's Day.

SONO (a lady).

Jan. 2

### *Wind in the Pine Trees*

Matsu kaze mo  
Mada yo fukaki ni  
Utai-zome.

The night wind whistles clear  
Among the rustling pine-tree tops  
The first song of the year.

SEIBI.

(SEE NOTE 1)

Jan. 3

### *A Cold Morning*

Waga neta wo  
Kôbe agete miru  
Samusa kana.

Fresh from the land of dreams  
I raise my sleepy head ; but, ah !  
How cold the morning seems,

RAIZAN.



# JANUARY

## Jan. 4 *An Image on the Moor*

No Hotoke no  
Hana no saki kara  
Tsurara kana.

Far from the busy town

This Buddha stands, and from his nose

An icicle drips down.

(SEE NOTE 2)

ISSA.

## Jan. 5 *A Winter Gale*

Kogarashi no  
Hate wa ari keri  
Umi no oto.

The hurricane's wild roar

Dies down a moment, but the waves

Still dash upon the shore.

GENSUI.

## Jan. 6 *Courage and Endurance*

Yo arashi ni  
Kenu beki koye ya  
Kan-ne-Butsu.

Though winter storms may rage,

The pilgrim should not falter on

His midnight pilgrimage.

(SEE NOTE 3)

SEIUN.

## Jan. 7 *The Pilgrim of the Night*

Hoso nichii ni  
Nari-yuku koye ya  
Kan-ne-Butsu.

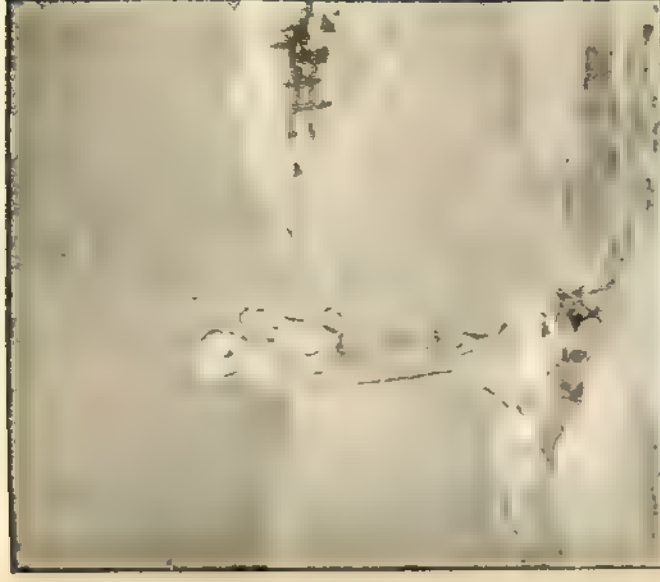
Is it not true to say,

The midnight pilgrim with his bell

Pursues the narrow way?

(SEE NOTE 3)

BUSON.



January 4

## *An Image on the Moor*

Far from the busy town  
This Buddha stands, and from his nose  
An icicle drips down.

# JANUARY

Jan. 8

## *Winter Pilgrimage*

Shira yuki no  
Naka ni koye ari  
Kan-ne-Butsu.

Across the snow so white  
I hear the bell of him who goes  
On pilgrimage to-night.

KYOTA.

(SEE NOTE 3)

Jan. 9

## *Snow on the Willows*

Furu yuki wo  
Suso kara harau  
Yanagi kana.

The willows hanging low  
Shake from their long and trailing skirts  
The freshly fallen snow.

TSURU (a lady).

(SEE NOTE 17)

Jan. 10

## *A Night of Snow*

Saku-saku to  
Wara kuu uma ya  
Yoru no yuki.

Snow falls at close of day,  
And all is soft and silent, save  
The horses crunching hay.

KIŪKOKU.

(SEE NOTE 4)

Jan. 11

## *The Song of the Boatmen*

Fune-biki no  
Koye no togari ya  
Yoru no yuki.

With snow the world is white,  
How clearly sounds the song of those  
Who tow the boats to-night.

GINA.



# JANUARY

Jan. 12

Ne no hi suru  
Nobe ni medetashi  
Tera no kado.

SEIBI.

I love to wend my way  
Towards some country temple's gate  
On the Rat holiday.

(SEE NOTE 5)

## Jan. 13 *Waving Pine Trees*

Hatsu ne no hi  
Kakaete warau  
Matsu mo ari.

RYOTA.

The very pine-trees sway  
And laugh and try to kiss their hands  
On the Rat holiday.

(SEE NOTE 5)

Jan. 14

## *Snow on the Pine Trees*

Toshi-doshi ni  
Yuki furedo mada  
Matsu oran.

MOMBAN.

The years may come and go,  
But still the pine-tree flourishes,  
Though sprinkled with the snow.

(SEE NOTE 6)

Jan. 15

## *An Untimely Visitor*

Uzumibi ya  
Kabe ni wa kaku no  
Kage-bōshi.

BASHŌ.

Alas! My fire is out,  
And there's a shadow on the wall—  
A visitor, no doubt.

(SEE NOTE 7)

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# JANUARY

Jan. 16

## *An Untimely Visitor*

Uzumibi ya  
Yo fukete kado wo  
Taraku oto.

KIOROKU.

The night is growing late,  
My fire is almost out; but, hark!  
Who's knocking at the gate?

(SEE NOTE 7)

Jan. 17

## *Cheerless Daybreak*

Akatsuki ya  
Hai no naka yori  
Kirigirisu.

TANDAN.

The day breaks cold and drear,  
And in the ashes of my hearth  
A cricket's chirp I hear.

(SEE NOTE 8)

Jan. 18

## *A Cold Winter's Night*

Sumi nashi to  
Iu koye shoya mo  
Fuke ni keru.

SEIBI.

The night is scarce begun,  
And yet I hear a voice that says,  
'The charcoal is all done!'

(SEE NOTE 9)

Jan. 19

## *A Bell at Night*

Kane sayuru  
Yoru ya nezumi no  
Oto mo sezu.

KIRIN.

Now all the world's asleep;  
Even the rats are silent, and  
A bell sounds clear and deep.

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# JANUARY

## Jan. 20 *My Little Sword-bearer*

Tachi mochi wa  
Yuki ni koronde  
Miyenu nari.

Where is the boy? Hallo!  
The little lad who bears my sword  
Has tumbled in the snow.

SHIGEN.

(SEE NOTE 10)

## Jan. 21 *Winter Solitude*

Nani to naku  
Fuyu yo tonari wo  
Kikare keri.

When bound in winter's thrall,  
'Tis comforting across the night  
To hear a neighbour's call.

KIKAKU.

## Jan. 22 *Night on the Ocean*

Tsuki sumu ya  
Oto naki mizu ni  
Uki ne dori.

Hushed is the silent deep,  
The moon is shining brightly, and  
The seagulls float asleep.

RANKŌ.

## Jan. 23 *Peace on the Water*

Nami ni uku  
Tsuki wo makura ya  
Uki ne dori.

Th' reflected moon shall make  
A pillow for the bird that floats  
Asleep upon the lake.

RENSEN.

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# JANUARY

## Jan. 24 *Frightened Water-birds*

Mizu dori ya  
Nan ni odoroku  
Yoru no koyo.

What causes them such fright,  
Those timid water-birds? 'Tis but  
The whisper of the night.

TÔDŌ.

## Jan. 25 *Floating Seagulls*

Oki naka ya  
Tori no uki ne ni  
Yû akari.

The shades of evening creep  
Far off across the ocean, where  
The seagulls float asleep.

SŌKYU.

## Jan. 26 *The Troubles of Life*

Chira-chira to  
Tsumorade yuki no  
Hate ni keri.

There comes a rest at last,  
Not always will life's dazzling snow  
Keep piling up so fast.

SEKIU.

(SEE NOTE 11)

## Jan. 27 *Hawks and Sparrows*

Taka gari ya  
Suzume wa yoso no  
Ume no bana.

When hawks are in the air,  
The plums may go to Jericho  
For all the sparrows care!

YAHŌ.

(SEE NOTE 12)

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## JANUARY

Jan. 28

### *The Hawk*

Kari kurete  
Taka no manako ni  
Iri hi kana.

His hunting day now done,  
The fierce hawk quietly contemplates  
The gently setting sun.

ENSHI.

(SEE NOTE 13)

Jan. 29

### *The Early Plum Blossom*

Kambai ya  
Hito no samusa wo  
Warau iro.

Mid snow and bitter wind  
The plum-tree blooms and smiles upon  
The coldness of mankind.

KANSHU.

(SEE NOTE 14)

Jan. 30

### *The Fall of the Plum Blossoms*

Miru naka ni  
Furi ushinau ya  
Yuki no ume.

I came to look, and lo!  
The plum-tree petals scatter down,  
A fall of purest snow.

RANKÔ.

Jan. 31

### *The Owl*

Mimi-zuku ya  
Omôï-kiritaru  
Hiru no sora.

The midday sky, no doubt,  
Is one thing that the owl has quite  
Made up its mind about.

KAIKÔ.

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## FEBRUARY

[EARLY SPRING]

Feb. 1

### *A Cold Spring*

Cha no hana ya  
Haru mada samuki  
Wasure saku.

So chilly is the spring,  
My little tea plants quite forget  
They should be blossoming!

BANRAI.

Feb. 2

### *Sunshine on the Snow*

Nichi harete  
Moyuru ga gotoshi  
Haru no yuki.

In spring the sun shines bright;  
Almost you'd think its rays had set  
The sparkling snow alight.

RANKÔ.

Feb. 3

### *Snow in Spring*

Ara uni no  
Oto shizumarte  
Haru no yuki.

O'er the wild raging main  
The snow of spring falls softly down  
And hushes it again.

BUNSHIN.

Feb. 4

### *Powder-puff*

Otome ko no  
Oshiroi hodo ya  
Haru no yuki.

This spring there's just enough  
Soft powdered snow for little girls  
To use as powder-puff.

(SEE NOTE 15)

RISEI.

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## FEBRUARY

### *Sleet on the Pines*

Feb. 5

Fūwari to  
Awa-yuki noru ya  
Kishi no matsu.

The sleet so soft and fine  
Falls lightly down upon the cliff  
And on the sturdy pine.

RYŌSETSU.

### Feb. 6 *A Cold Sea Breeze*

Ao umi no  
Kaze watarite ya  
Kōri uku.

Across the deep blue sea  
O'er many a floating berg of ice  
This wind has blown to me.

RYŌSHŌ.

### Feb. 7 *A Flight of Wild Geese*

Sae-kaeru  
Kari no ha kaze ya  
Yū zuki yo.

Is it the wild-geese flight, [breeze  
Whose flapping wings have made the  
This chilly moonlight night?

TAJIBIN.

### *Daffodils*

Feb. 8

Suisen no  
Haru made nokoru  
Samusa kana.

In spite of cold and chills  
That usher in the early spring  
We have the daffodils.

KIKURŌ.

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## FEBRUARY

### Feb. 9 *The Remains of the Snow*

Ō tera no  
Ki kage hi kage ya  
Nokoru yuki.

This temple still can show,  
Saved by the shadow of the trees,  
A little patch of snow.

RENGETSU.

(SEE NOTE 16)

### Feb. 10 *A Solitary Willow on the Moor*

Mizu oto no  
No naka sabishiki  
Yanagi kana.

Poor lonely willow-tree,  
With nothing but the bubbling brook  
To keep it company!

SHADŌ.

(SEE NOTE 17)

### Feb. 11 *Plums Blossoming in the Snow*

Ume no hana  
Yuki ga furite mo  
Saki ni keru.

What though the snow may fall!  
It makes no difference to the plums,  
They blossom through it all.

CHARAI.

(SEE NOTE 18)

### Feb. 13 *Plum Blossom*

Haku bai ni  
Itsutsu no kuruma  
Narabe keru.

Perfect in form and hue,  
The five white petals of the plum  
Arranged in order due.

SEISEI.

(SEE NOTE 19)

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## FEBRUARY

### Feb. 13 *Plum Blossoms in the Dusk*

Koi no oto                    Plum blossoms, white as snow !  
Mizu honoguraku        And all is still, save when the carp  
Ume shiroshi.            Splash in the stream below.

URITSU.

### Feb. 14 *The Sympathy of the Plums*

Hana mireba                No tears have they to shed ;  
Niou namida no        The plums can only show their grief  
Kobore keri.            By shedding scent instead.

(SEE NOTE 30)

HŪSEN.

### Feb. 15 *The Moon's Halo*

Ume ga kō no            Plum blossoms, pink and white,  
Tachi-noborite ya        Your perfume sweet a halo casts  
Tsuki no kasa.            Around the moon to-night.

(SEE NOTE 21)

BUSON.

### Feb. 16 *Plum Perfume and Moonlight*

Yū-zuki no                My balcony to-night  
Hosodono ni ume        Is filled with perfume of the plums  
Kaoru nari.            And flooded with moonlight.

ANONYMOUS.



February 18

### *The Perfume of the Plums*

So sweet the plum-trees smell ;  
Would that the brush that paints the flower  
Could paint the scent as well

# FEBRUARY

## Feb. 17 *Scattered Plum Petals*

Kusa ni kô           The blossoms droop and fade,  
Kaoredô chiru ya   The perfume of the plums, though sweet,  
Ume no hana.       Low in the grass is laid.

SHAGIU.

## Feb. 18 *The Perfume of the Plums*

Ume no hana       So sweet the plum-trees smell;  
Kô nagara utsutsu   Would that the brush that paints the flower  
Fude mogana.       Could paint the scent as well!

SHÔHA.

## Feb. 19 *The White Camellia*

Shira tsubaki       Nought breaks the moonlight hush,  
Ochiru oto nomi    Save now and then a head that falls  
Tsuiki yo kana.     From the camellia bush.

RANKÔ.           (SEE NOTE 22)

## Feb. 20 *Camellia Heads*

Ochi tsubaki       Rain splashes on the beds,  
Hiku no nezumi ya   And skurrying rats are dragging off  
Ame no oto.       The dead camellia heads.

SHICHIKU.

(SEE NOTE 22)



# FEBRUARY

## Feb. 21 *Pink Plum Blossoms*

Kō bai ni                    A heavy cloud hangs low—  
Asahi no akaki            A cloud of blossoms o'er the land,  
Kumori kana.             Pink, like the sunrise glow.

BUNDO.

## Feb. 22 *An Image of Buddha*

Kō bai ya                 The pink plum blossoms shed  
Ōkina Mida ni            The glory of their radiancy  
Hikari sasu.             O'er great Amida's head.

(SEE NOTE 23)

TAIGI.

## Feb. 23 *A Landscape*

Kō bai no                 Far across hill and dale  
Hikari no de nashi       The blossoms of the plum have cast  
Yama de nashi.          A delicate pink veil.

KIHŌ.

## Feb. 24 *A Fall of Snow*

Kō bai ya                 Daybreak has come to show  
Yo wa usuyuki ni        The pink plums blossoming amid  
Ake hanare.             The softly falling snow.

EIKI.

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# FEBRUARY

## Feb. 25 *Approaching Death*

Nehan-e ya                At last my hour has come;  
Yanagi ni kurete          The sun, which on the willow sets,  
Ume no asa.               Shall rise upon the plum.

THE PRIEST TAISHI.

(SEE NOTE 24)

## Feb. 26 *Rest after Toil*

Samazama to             In many ways we know  
Setsu kutabirete         Nirvana waits for weary souls  
Nehan kana.             After life's toil below.

KODŌ.

## Feb. 27 *Nirvana*

Shaka-Nyorai            Buddha himself has said,  
Itta kao sezu             'Tis not the body of a man  
Neraretari.              That sleeps when he is dead.

SHŪSEN.

## Feb. 28 *Nirvana*

Nehan-e ya                The black clouds gather fast,  
Hito shizumarete        And night draws on, but we shall reach  
Yū kumori.               Eternal rest at last.

SHIFŪ.

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# MARCH

## [MID SPRING]

### Mar. 1 *The Footsore Pilgrim*

Tabi-bito no  
Geta hiki-zuru ya  
Oboro tsuki.

Veiled is the moon's pale light,  
And wearily this pilgrim drags  
His heavy feet to-night.

SHÖROKU.

### Mar. 2 *The Sleeping Buddha*

Dai Butsu no  
Nemuru mono nara  
Oboro tsuki.

To-night the moonlight beams  
Are veiled by kindly clouds; for, hush!  
Great Buddha sleeps and dreams.

CHÖSUI.

### Mar. 3 *Under the Shade of the Pines*

Oboro to wa  
Matsu no kurosa ni  
Tsuki yo kana.

When the bright moon above  
Can scarcely pierce the shady pines,  
That is the dusk I love.

KIKAKU.

18

# MARCH

### Mar. 4 *Moths*

Ö hara ya  
Chō no dete man  
Oboro tsuki.

The moon is clouded o'er,  
And soon the moths will sally forth  
To dance upon the moor.

jōsō.

### Mar. 5 *A Cloudy Moon*

Oshisō ni  
Yo no akeru nari  
Oboro tsuki.

When clouds drive o'er the moon,  
Too quickly flies the lovely night,  
The morning comes too soon.

KODŌ.

### Mar. 6 *The Silent Moonlight*

Ita-bashi no  
Oto shizuka nari  
Oboro tsuki.

Clouds veil the pale moonlight,  
The creaking of the bridge alone  
Disturbs the silent night.

KITŌ.

### Mar. 7 *Stillness*

Furu ike ya  
Kawazu tobi-komu  
Mizu no oto.

Into the calm old lake  
A frog with flying leap goes plop!  
The peaceful hush to break.

BASHŌ.

(SEE NOTE 24)

19



## MARCH

Mar. 8

### *Tranquillity*

Nodokasa ya  
Hayaki tsuki ni wo  
Wasuretari.

So peacefully live I,  
I scarcely heed how rapidly  
The days and months slip by.

TAIGL

Mar. 9

### *The Coming Storm*

Nodokasa no  
Hate wa kumorite  
Kure ni keru.

A lurid setting sun,  
A sky banked up with cloud, and so  
This peaceful day is done.

BOKUSUI.

Mar. 10

### *Sea Fog*

Hama michi ya  
Tsumazuku bakari  
Usu-gasumi.

The fog lies thick to-day;  
Alone I wandered on the shore,  
And now I've lost my way.

GOBUTSU.

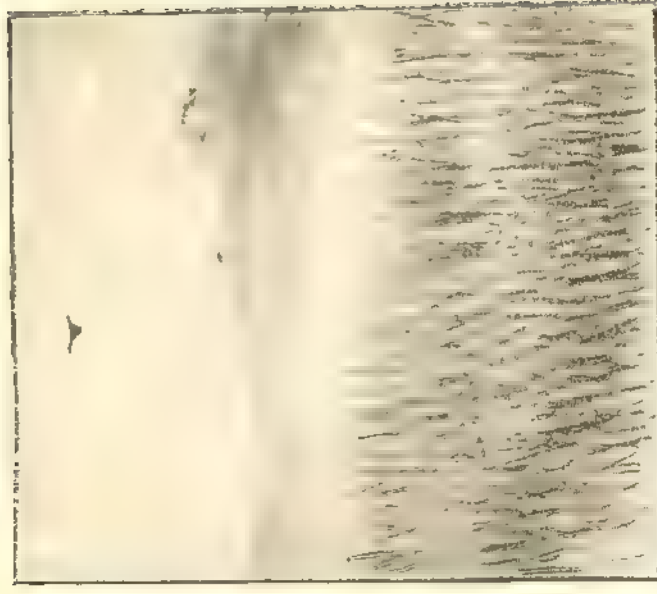
Mar. 11

### *The Evening Mist*

Hashigeta ya  
Hi wa sashi nagara  
Yû-gasumi.

The evening mist hangs low,  
And through the cross-beams of the bridge  
The slanting sunbeams show.

HOKUSHI.



March 14

### *The Soaring Skylark*

Too high the lark has flown;  
The young ones long for her return,  
Left in the nest alone.

# MARCH

Mar. 12

## *The Sunset Bell*

Kane no koye  
Sate wa tera ari  
Yū-gasumi.

The mists close round about  
The holy Buddhist temple, and  
The sunset bell rings out.

UNGIO.

(SEE NOTE 26)

Mar. 13

## *Sunset*

Yama-gasumi  
Umi kurenai no  
Yūbe kana.

The crimson sunset glow  
Is on the mountain, on the mist,  
And on the sea below.

RANKŌ.

Mar. 14

## *The Soaring Skylark*

Ko ya matan  
Amari hibi no  
Taka agari.

'Too high the lark has flown;  
The young ones long for her return,  
Left in the nest alone.

SANPŪ.

(SEE NOTE 27)

Mar. 15

## *The Weary Skylark*

Koye mo ha mo  
Yasume ni orin  
Hibari kana.

When voice and wings need rest,  
The little skylark from the sky  
Drops down into her nest.

NAGANOI.

(SEE NOTE 27)



MARCH

Mar. 16 *At the Lake Side*

Uguisu ya  
Kosui mo kishi e  
Sazara nami.

The nightingale's sweet trill,  
The splash of ripples on the shore,  
And all the rest is still.

RIÖRIÜ.

(SEE NOTE 28)

Mar. 17 *The Early Cherry Flowers*

Kane tsukite  
Sakaseru Higan  
Sakura kana.

Strike the great bell, I pray,  
To bid the early cherry-trees  
Burst into bloom to-day.

FÜSÖ.

(SEE NOTE 29)

Mar. 18 *A Spring Morning*

Sore mo kari  
Kore mo kari nari  
Kesa no haru.

A clear spring morning sky,  
And here and there, far overhead,  
Singing the wild geese fly.

RYÖTO.

Mar. 19 *Wild Geese at Night*

Kita hodo wa  
Kaeranu koye ya  
Yoru no kari.

To-night the wild geese pass  
Far overhead, and now their song  
Has died away, alas!

TAIGI.

22

MARCH

Mar. 20 *A Flight of Wild Geese*

Yuku kari ya  
Mada atarashiki  
Tabi no sora.

Far off the wild geese fly;  
Each trip they make they ever take  
A new track o'er the sky.

SHÜSHÜ.

Mar. 21 *The Return of the Swallows*

Yama no ha ni  
Tsubame wo kaesu  
Iri-bi kana.

The sunset's golden track,  
'That streams across the mountain-top,  
Conducts the swallows back,

KIKAKU.

Mar. 22 *Twining of Swallows*

Su no tsubame  
Asa-ne no uchi ni  
Naki ni keru.

The swallows in their nest,  
That twitter in the early dawn,  
Disturb my morning rest.

SHÖSAN.

Mar. 23 *Early Daybreak*

Akebono ya  
Mada tobi desanu  
Kusa no chô.

The dawn's first glimmers pass  
Across the skies, but butterflies  
Still linger in the grass.

JÖBOKU.

23

# MARCH

Mar. 24

Karuki mi ni  
Agumishi sama ya  
Kaze no chô.

SHÛSEN.

## Frailty

My body weak and frail  
Is weary, like a butterfly  
That struggles with the gale.

Mar. 25

Yo no naka ya  
Chô chô tomare—  
Kaku-mo-are.

SÔIN.

## Butterflies

The world is cold and grey,  
But still we have the butterflies  
To chase our cares away.

(SEE NOTE 30)

Mar. 26

Hana no yume  
Kikitaki chô ni  
Koye mo nashi.

REIKAN.

## A Butterfly's Dream

These butterflies of ours—  
If they could speak, what pretty dreams  
We'd hear about the flowers.

Mar. 27

Oki oki yo  
Waga tomo ni sen  
Neru ko chô.

BASHÔ.

## A Sleeping Butterfly

Wake up, wake up, now do,  
You sleepy-headed butterfly,  
I want to play with you.

24

# MARCH

Mar. 28

Chô no ha ni  
Bakari kaze aru  
Hi yori kana.

YUN.

## A Still Day

Warm sun and cloudless skies;  
The only breath of air is from  
The wings of butterflies.

Mar. 29

Chô no tobu  
Bakari no naka no  
Hi kage kana.

BASHÔ.

## A Butterfly on the Moor

The sun shines in the sky,  
And far across the moor there flits  
A single butterfly.

(SEE NOTE 31)

Mar. 30

Ô tera no  
Tobira aketaru  
Harubi kana.

GUSAI.

## The Sun in Spring

This holy temple's door—  
The spring sun flings it open wide  
And streams upon the floor.

Mar. 31

Kokokashiko  
Kawazu naku yo ya  
Hoshi no kage.

KIKAKU.

## A Starlight Night

The stars are shining bright,  
And here and there a single frog  
Croaks in the stilly night.

(SEE NOTE 32)

25

# APRIL

[LATE SPRING]

## Apr. 1 *Cherry Blossom Time*

Ume chireba  
Momo momo chireba  
Sakura kana.

Plum blossoms all have gone,  
And peaches, even peaches too,  
But cherries now come on.

KEIBA.

(SEE NOTE 18)

## Apr. 2 *Cherry Blossom*

Hoku tani wa  
Nan tani wa ima  
Yama zakura.

Now cherries blossom forth,  
And deck the valleys of the south,  
The valleys of the north.

SHŌHA.

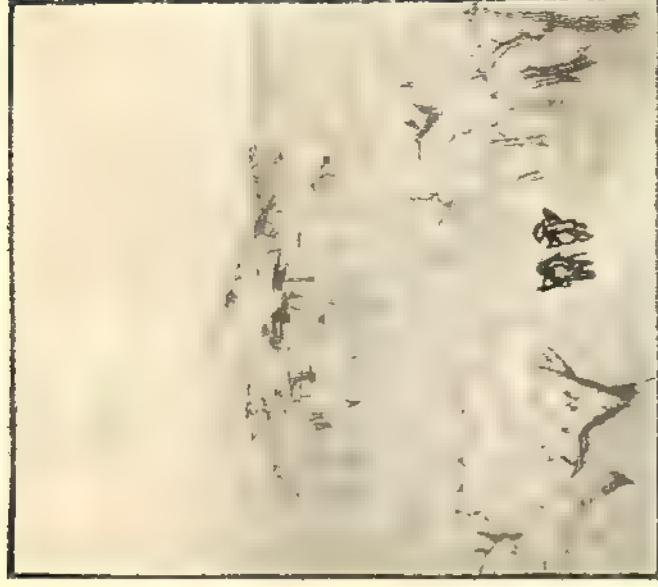
## Apr. 3 *Yoshino*

Kore wa kore wa  
To bakari hana no  
Yoshino yana.

At lovely Yoshino  
The mountain cherries here and there  
Have just begun to show.

TEISHITSU.

(SEE NOTE 33)



Apr. 3

*Yoshino*

At lovely Yoshino  
The mountain cherries here and there  
Have just begun to show.



# APRIL

## Apr. 4 *The Traveller's Rest*

Hana no kage      A wayside cherry-tree  
Utai ni nitaru    Is to a weary pilgrim like  
Tabine kana.     A restful lullaby.

BASHŌ.

## Apr. 5 *The Fish Salesman*

Yo wa sakura      To-day, while others roam  
Kado wa tai uru    To view the cherries, I must stay  
Hi yori kana.      And sell my fish at home.

HAKUVŪ.

## Apr. 6 *The Beauty of Cherry Blossom*

Hana wo yaru      This life is but a dream,  
Sakura ya yume no    O'er which the cherries blossoming  
Uki yo mono.        Cast their enchanting gleam.

SUTE (a lady).

## Apr. 7 *A Disappointed Woodpecker*

Kitsutsuki ya      Mid cherry blossoms gay  
Kare ki wo sagasu    In vain the poor woodpecker seeks  
Hana no naka.        A rotten tree to-day!

JŌSŌ.

Apr. 8 *A Mountain Shintō Shrine*

Mine iri wa Up to the mountain shrine  
 Miya mo waraji no The pilgrims' cast-off sandals still  
 Tabiji kana. The well-worn path define.

SŌIN.

Apr. 9 *A Deserted Temple*

Furu dera ya The shrine is in decay,  
 Kane mono iwazu The bell is dumb, and over all  
 Sakura chiru. Scatter the blossoms gay.

(SEE NOTE 34)

Apr. 10 *The Cherry and the Pine*

Ō tera ya What though the blossoms fall!  
 Hana chiru oku ni The temple pine-trees softly sing  
 Matsu no koye. Of life beyond it all.

KIGAN.

Apr. 11 *The Frog and the Cherry Petal*

Naku kuchi e A petal lightly dropped  
 Hana no chiri-komu Upon the mouth of Mr. Frog,  
 Kawazu kana. And now his song has stopped.

RŪKIO.

28

Apr. 12 *The Cherry and the Water-wheel*

Yama zakura Admire them while you may—  
 Chiru ya ogawa no The cherry drops its petals, and  
 Mizu-guruma. The water-wheel its spray.

CHIGETSU.

Apr. 13 *In Memory of his Dead Wife*

Chiru hana wo The petals, one by one,  
 Shian shite miru Are scattered, and the frogs look on  
 Kawazu kana. But tell their thoughts to none.

TŌGA.

Apr. 14 *The Blossoms soon Fall*

Saku kara ni 'Tis true the blossoms grow,  
 Miru kara ni hana no 'Tis true we see their beauty, and  
 Chiru kara ni. 'Tis true they quickly go.

ONITSURA.

Apr. 15 *Spring Breezes*

Uta shiranu To-day I tramp along  
 Tabi-bito hanashi In silence, for no hymn of mine  
 Haru no kaze. Could match the spring wind's song.

RYŌTA.

29

# APRIL

## Apr. 16 *The Playful Breeze*

Chō tori no  
Asobi-gataki ya  
Haru no kaze.

When the spring breezes rise,  
They play all sorts of merry games  
With birds and butterflies.

SHŌSAN.

## Apr. 17 *Shadows on the Cornfields*

Haru kaze ya  
Hi kage nagaruru  
Mugi no uye.

The clouds on spring winds borne  
Cast swiftly moving shadows o'er  
The waving fields of corn.

KODŌ.

## Apr. 18 *An Evening in Spring*

Harusame ya  
Shizuka ni kureru  
Kane no koyo.

The bells at sunset ring,  
And evening brings a gentle shower,  
The welcome shower of spring.

MIYOSHI.

## Apr. 19 *The Late Blossoming Cherry*

Iwa bashiru  
Mizu no hibiki ya  
Oso zakura.

Here the late cherry grows,  
And bubbling o'er its pebble bed  
A little streamlet flows.

GANSHŪ.

30

# APRIL

## *Wistaria*

Apr. 20

Yusa yusa to  
Kaze mo nemutashi  
Fuji no hana.

Rocked by the breezes light,  
The blossoming wistaria  
Sleeps peacefully to-night.

SŌKŌ.

## Apr. 21 *Azaleas*

Rōka yori  
Mi-orosu ishi no  
Tsutsuji kana.

'Tis the azaleas grow  
Beneath my little balcony  
Among the rocks below.

KYOSHI.

## Apr. 22 *Gulls at Sea*

Haru kaze wo  
Sujikai ni kiru  
Kanome kana.

Slanting across the sky,  
Blown by the gusty breeze of spring,  
The gulls sail swiftly by.

FUJINOYA.

(SEE NOTE 35)

## Apr. 23 *Pear Blossom*

Nashi no hana  
Uruwashii ama ga  
Nem Butsu made.

The blossoms of the pear?  
No holy nun immaculate,  
Methinks, is half as fair!

GENSUL.

31



# APRIL

## Apr. 24 *Moonlight and Pear Blossoms*

Nashi no hana  
T'suki ni fumi yomu  
Onna ari.

See, by the moon's pale light,  
A maiden wanders 'neath the pears,  
Reading a note to-night.

BUSON.

## Apr. 25 *Mist on the Sea Shore*

Usu-gasumi  
Fuki nagarete ya  
Iso no nori.

The seaweed's scattered o'er  
The rocks, and waves of wet sea mist  
Roll up along the shore.

SŌGWAN.

## Apr. 26 *The Yellow Rose*

Yamabuki ya  
Ha ni hana ni ha ni  
Hana ni ha ni.

The yellow rose achieves  
Only a mass of leaves and flowers  
And leaves and flowers and leaves.

(SEE NOTE 36)

TAIGI.

## Apr. 27 *Peonies*

Yuku haru ya  
Botan ni utsuru  
Hito gokoro.

When spring is on the wane,  
Then men are apt to turn their thoughts  
To peonies again.

KOYŪ.

32

# APRIL

## *Passing Spring*

Apr. 28

Yuku haru ni  
Kataru fuzei ya  
Noji no chō.

The spring has passed away;  
Or so at least the butterflies  
Upon the moor would say.

GABL

(SEE NOTE 37)

## Apr. 29 *Spring Departs*

Yuku haru wo  
Oi beki kane mo  
Motoranu ka.

Though every bell should ring  
To call it back, who can recall  
The year's departing spring!

SHARA.

## Apr. 30 *Summer Approaches*

Kawa uye ni  
Uguisu narite  
Natsu chikashi.

Across the stream I hear  
A nightingale, who sings to say  
Summer is drawing near.

MEISETSU.

33

# MAY

## May 4 *Poppy Petals*

Keshi chirite                      The poppy petals fall!  
Yume hodo nokoru              The moon must fancy what they were,  
T'suki yo kana.                  And dream about it all.

TSUNEMARU.

## May 5 *The Corn Poppy*

Natsukashiki                      Nothing can ere surpass  
Na nari hana nari              The beauty of that name and flower—  
Bi-jin-sô.                          'The pretty lady-grass.'

SHŪCHŌ.                              (SEE NOTE 38)

## May 6 *Growing Wheat*

Ichī asa no                          Each morn my wheat I view,  
Ichī tsuyu take ya              It through the night adds to its height  
Mugi no iro.                      By just a drop of dew.

SHUNSU.

## May 7 *An Ancient Battlefield*

Natsu gusa ya                      Asleep within the grave  
T'suwamono-domo ga              The soldiers dream, and overhead  
Yume no ato.                      The summer grasses wave.

BASHŌ.                              (SEE NOTE 39)

35

# MAY

## [EARLY SUMMER]

### May 1 *Clouds and Poppies*

Shira-gumo no                      Below, the poppies red;  
Sora yuku keshi no              And driving o'er the summer sky  
Sakaru kana.                      The white clouds overhead.

KWANAI.

### May 2 *Poppies in Bloom*

Amatsu kaze                          Oh! winds of Heaven, pray,  
Shibashi todome yo              A moment calm your tumult, for  
Keshi no hana.                      The poppies bloom to-day.

OYEMARU.

### May 3 *A Clap of Thunder*

Ikazuchi no                          Above and all around  
Hibiki ni chiru ka              The thunder rolls, and poppies drop  
Keshi no hana.                      Their petals on the ground.

SHŌITSU.

34

MAY

May 8 *The Birthday of Buddha*

Shiranu yo ni  
Haerete miseru  
Hotoke kana.

Now is the sacred time  
Buddha was born into a world  
Of ignorance and crime.

ROKUSŌ.

(SEE NOTE 40)

May 9 *The Birthday of Buddha*

Kwam Butsu ya  
Ni hon no yubi wa  
Hanjinomono.

Buddha proclaims his birth,  
One hand in symbol points to heaven,  
The other points to earth.

CHŌSUI.

(SEE NOTE 40)

May 10 *Bamboos in Moonlight*

Hototogisu  
Ō dake yabu wo  
Moru tsuki yo.

Between the bamboos tall  
The moonlight softly trickles, and  
I hear the cuckoo's call.

BASHŌ.

(SEE NOTE 41)

May 11 *In the Woods at Night*

Hototogisu  
Yoru wa ki wo kiru  
Oto mo nashi.

The woodcutter has gone,  
And while the cuckoo sings alone  
The shades of night draw on.

KOZAN.

36

MAY

May 12 *The Cuckoo*

Hototogisu  
Hitsuji wo tsukamu  
Kumo na yori.

A cuckoo in the skies!  
His song would pierce a coffin-lid  
And bid the dead arise.

BUSON.

May 13 *Break of Day*

Hototogisu  
Naku ya yo-ake no  
Umi ga naru.

At early dawn I hear  
Only the waves upon the shore,  
The cuckoo's call so clear.

HAKUYŪ.

May 14 *The Early Morning Cuckoo*

Hototogisu  
Kane tsuki ni yuku  
Kozō kana.

The cuckoo sings to tell  
The little temple acolyte  
To ring the morning bell.

BETTENRŌ.

May 15 *The Mystic Cuckoo*

Mimizuku no  
Me ni ba sayaka ni  
Hototogisu.

No doubt the owl can see  
The cuckoo flying through the night,  
Invisible to me.

SEIGA.

37



# MAY

## May 16 *The Cuckoo's Song*

Yatō ni mo  
Ten no atae ya  
Hototogisu.  
The cuckoo's song is given  
Even to thieves who prowl at night,—  
A precious gift from heaven.

SŌKŪ.

## May 17 *Cuckoo and the Echo*

Yamabiko ka  
Satemo futa koye  
Hototogisu.  
The cuckoo cuckooing!  
And listen—there's another voice,  
The echo echoing!

SANKA.

## May 18 *Towing a Boat*

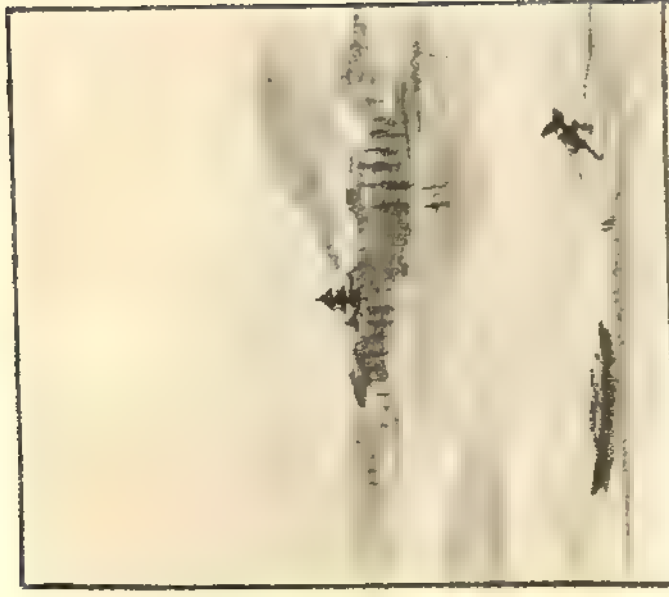
Hiki tsuna no  
Yurumu kobane ya  
Hototogisu.  
Was that the cuckoo's song?  
I needs must stop, my tow-rope slacks,  
The boat just drifts along.

JOSUI.

## May 19 *The End of the Cuckoo's Song*

Kumo wa ima  
T'suki wo noman su  
Hototogisu.  
All things must pass, and soon  
Its nest will hide the cuckoo, and  
The clouds will hide the moon.

KWAYŌ.



May 18

## *Towing a Boat*

Was that the cuckoo's song?  
I needs must stop, my tow-rope slacks,  
The boat just drifts along.

# MAY

May 20

## *Cherry Trees*

Hana no ki no  
Hana wo shinaeba  
Wakaba kana.

The blossoms all have gone,  
But still the trees are lovely, for  
The fresh green leaves come on.

DEMPUKU.

(SEE NOTE 42)

May 21

## *A Temple Hidden in the Trees*

Yama-dera no  
Kakurete kemuru  
Wakaba kana.

The fresh green leaves combine  
To hide, as in a cloud of smoke,  
This little mountain shrine.

SHŌSAN.

May 22

## *A Summer Scene*

Natsu-gusa ya  
Kaze fuki-wakete  
Mizu miyuru.

The gentle breezes blow,  
And part the summer foliage  
To show the pool below.

TOYŪ

May 23

## *A Country Lane*

Natsu-gusa ya  
Konichi kakuru  
Ame no kure.

Now that the summer showers  
Have passed away, the country lanes  
Are hidden in the flowers.

GOSEN.

## MAY

May 24 *A Mountain Path*

Natsu-gusa ya  
Yama-dera michi no  
Ishi Botoke.

Blossoms the pathway line,  
Like rows of graven images  
Up to this mountain shrine.

GOJO.

May 25 *The Nightingale Grown Old*

Uguisu ya  
Kago ni ukimi no  
Oi wo naku.

Confined within its cage,  
My nightingale sings mournfully,  
Lamenting its old age.

NIOGIŌ.

May 26 *Dewdrops on the Roses*

Oku tsuyu mo  
Sawaranu sashi ya  
Bara no hana.

No rose could ever rue  
The exquisite embroidery  
Of sparkling drops of dew.

RŪMIN.

(SEE NOTE 43)

## May 27

Shiromizu no  
Nagaruru sue ya  
Koke no hana.

This crystal water's flow  
Shall lead you gently on to where  
The flow'ring mosses grow.

KAKO.

40

## MAY

May 28 *Fallen Pine Needles*

Ishi no uye ni  
Koke aō matsu no  
Ochiba kana.

Fine needles all around,  
Green as the moss upon a stone,  
Lie thick upon the ground.

TEMBUTSU.

May 29 *Short Nights*

Mijika yo ni  
Waga me tarashite  
Tachi ni keru.

In summer sleep is vain;  
I barely close my eyelids when  
'Tis time to wake again.

IRIŪ.

May 30 *Daybreak in Summer*

Hito oto no  
Yamu toki natsu no  
Yo-ake kana.

This lovely summer morn  
Hushed is the voice of every man  
In wonder at the dawn.

RYŌTA.

## May 31

Sora iro no  
Ashita ni ugoku  
Kakisabata.

Ere yet the sun is high,  
All blue the iris blossoms wave,  
The colour of the sky.

GASETSU.

41

6

*The Iris*



# JUNE

## [MID SUMMER]

### June 1 *A Dress Blown by the Wind*

Usumono wo      The winds of heaven arise,  
Hiku ya tenjo no      My flapping robe seems gently pulled  
Amatsu kaze.      By angels from the skies.

MISETSU.

### June 2 *A Horse Race*

Chi ni tsukanu      A horse race? 'Tis the sound  
Hizume no kaze ya      Of rushing hoofs that gallop past  
Kurabe uma.      And barely touch the ground!

KODŌ.

### June 3 *Pity*

Kurabe uma      One sees with deep regret  
Okureshi ikki      The last poor rider in a race,  
Aware nari.      Who, failing, struggles yet.

SHIKI.

42

(SEE NOTE 44)

# JUNE

### June 4 *Chestnut Blossom*

Yamaji ni wa      The chestnut petals gay  
Furu mono ôshi      Fall thick upon the mountain path,  
Kuri no hana.      A marvellous display.

FÜHAN.

### June 5 *Green Plum Blossom*

Ao ume ya      So beautiful it is,  
Nusumi suru ko no      My plum would almost tempt a child  
Utsukushiki.      To take what is not his.

RANKŌ.

(SEE NOTE 45)

### June 6 *A Shintō Shrine*

Ao ume no      Here there is peace profound,  
Ochite shizuka ni      Save when the petals of the plum  
Yashiro kana.      Fall lightly to the ground.

YOZAKURA.

### June 7 *Crocuses*

Beni tsumu ya      The sunrise tints the dew;  
Tsuyu ni asahi no      The yellow crocuses are out,  
Agaru uchi.      And I must pick a few.

JŌSA.

43

JUNE

June 8

*A Lily*

Hime yuri ya  
Ue yori sagaru  
Kamo no ito.

Down from her dainty head  
The Lily Princess lightly drops  
A spider's airy thread.

SŌRĪŌ.

(SEE NOTE 46)

June 9

*Duckweed*

Ukikusa ya  
Kaze ga oshi-komu  
Hashi no shita.

The wind unkindly blows  
Down underneath the arches, where  
The peaceful duckweed grows.

KUBUTSU.

June 10

*The Pinks*

Nadeshiko ni  
Chitto kobose-kashi  
Matsu no kaze.

Oh, gentle breeze, I pray,  
Blow with the perfume of the pines  
Upon my pinks to-day.

ISSŌ.

(SEE NOTE 47)

June 11

*The Young Fawn*

Utsukushiki  
Koromo kite naru  
Ka no ko kana.

The dainty little fawn  
Is dressed with taste and beauty from  
The very day he's born.

BONJŪ.

44

JUNE

June 12

*The Bed of the Fawn*

Shika no ko ya  
Ne dokoro dekite  
Ao katsura.

The fawn so light and slim  
Finds that the low green creepers make  
A lovely bed for him.

YAHŌ.

June 13

*Moonlight on the Bamboos*

Waka take wo  
Suberu hikari ya  
Kaze no tsuki.

A thicket of bamboo  
Swayed by the evening breezes, and  
The moonlight trickling through.

KODŌ.

June 14

*The Horns of a Snail*

Shira tsuyu ya  
Tsuno ni me wo motsu  
Katatsumuri.

The snail his horns extends,  
And eyes, like drops of shining dew,  
Appear upon the ends.

RANSETSU.

June 15

*A Snail climbing Mount Fuji*

Katatsumuri  
Soro-soro nobore  
Fuji no yama.

The snail does all he can,  
But very, very sluggishly  
He climbs great Fuji San.

ISSA.

45

## JUNE

June 16 *Fields in Moonlight*

Kaze soyo-soyo  
Aota ni wataru  
Tsuki yo kana.

KORIŪ.

O'er the green fields and trees  
This lovely night the moon sails on,  
And softly blows the breeze.

(SEE NOTE 48)

June 17 *Planting Rice-fields*

Saotome ya  
Tsurenaku nigoru  
Mizu kagami.

SATUN.

This water should be clear,  
To serve as mirror for the girls  
Who plant the rice-fields here.

(SEE NOTE 49)

June 18 *The Farm Girls' Song*

Midare taru  
Koye ya higure no  
Ta ue uta.

NANRĪŌ.

With working all day long  
A-weary are the farmer's girls,  
And out of tune their song.

(SEE NOTE 49)

June 19 *Mimosa*

Nemu saku ya  
Nenu tori ki naku  
Yoi no yami.

TOSUI.

Mimosas are in flower,  
And wide awake the little birds  
Chirp in the twilight hour.

(SEE NOTE 50)

46

## JUNE

June 20 *Young Bamboos*

Kaze tsune ni  
Ha wo fuki dasu ya  
Konnen take.

CHIYO (a lady).

By many breezes blown  
My bamboo leaves are tossed about,  
The leaves but this year grown.

June 21 *Fishing with Cormorants*

Susuke taru  
Ujō ga kao yo  
Asaborake.

TŌRIN.

Smoke from their torches soil  
The faces of the fishermen,  
After their long night's toil.

(SEE NOTE 51)

June 22 *The Absent Fisherman*

Oi narishi  
Ukai konnen wa  
Miyenu kana.

BUSON.

Too old to work, I fear!  
The fisher with his cormorants  
I used to see last year.

(SEE NOTE 51)

June 23 *The Monkey Slipper*

Sarusuberi  
Mai nichī chirite  
Sakari nari.

SHŪSEN.

Oh, monkey slipper, pray,  
Why should your morning blossom droop  
And fall ere close of day?

(SEE NOTE 52)

47



# JUNE

## June 24 Square, Triangle, and Circle

Kaya no te wo      One corner I untie  
 Hitotsu hazushite      Of my mosquito net, and lo!  
 Tsuki mi kana.      I see the moon on high.  
 CHIYO (a lady).      (SEE NOTE 53)

## June 25 Life and its Troubles

Yo no naka wo      In a mosquito net  
 Shibashi wasuretsu      A man may for a little time  
 Kaya no uchi.      The cares of life forget.  
 RIUKIO.

## June 26 An Evening Scene

Yû kaze ya      A breeze blows o'er the lake;  
 Mizu aosagi no      Against the heron's slender legs  
 Hagi wo utsu.      The little ripples break.  
 BUSON.

## June 27 The Kingfisher

Kawasemi ya      The kingfisher to-day  
 Hane wo yosoute      Uses the lake as looking-glass  
 Mizu kagami.      To plume his wings so gay.  
 ROSEN.



June 27

## The Kingfisher

The kingfisher to-day  
 Uses the lake as looking-glass  
 To plume his wings so gay.

# JUNE

## Birds Moulting

June 28

Ha goromo no  
Matsu mite iru ya  
Ha nuke dori.

'Tis moulting time, and now  
Birds *pine* to see new feather robes  
Hung on the *pine*-tree bough.

KIUN.

(SEE NOTE 54)

## A Mountain Stream

June 29

Taka Nembutsu  
Mōsu tōge no  
Shimizu kana.  
ōSEN.

Babbling among the stones,  
The little mountain rivulet  
Its orison intones.

## An Afternoon Nap

June 30

Matsu kaze no  
Oto kiki nagara  
Hiru-ne kana.

The breezes softly sweep  
Among the rustling pine-tree tops,  
And send me off to sleep.

ISSHŪ.

# JULY

July 4

## *A Hot Night*

Kaze no Kami  
Fukuro wo ake-yo  
Natsu no tsuki.

Oh summer moon, we pray,  
Open the wind-bag of the Gods  
And let the zephyrs play.

KISEN.

# JULY

## [LATE SUMMER]

July 1

## *Shinō Purification*

Misogi shite  
Asaki nagare ya  
Mizu hikaru.

The sunlit waters gleam,  
And worshippers with solemn rites  
Wash in the shallow stream.

HEKIGODŌ.

(SEE NOTE 55)

July 2

## *The Hills in Summer*

Natsu no yama  
Shizuka ni tori no  
Nari ne kana.

Oh peaceful summer days,  
When on the hills the birds sing forth  
Their melody of praise.

SHŌHA.

July 3

## *A Summer Night's Ramble*

Hitori dete  
Katamuku made ya  
Natsu no tsuki.

I've wandered on to-night,  
Till now I see the summer moon  
Sink sideways out of sight.

BUKAKU.

50

July 5

## *A Snake Bite*

Kachinawa wo  
Fumishi hadaka ko  
Natsu no tsuki.

Our hearts in summer ache;  
'Twas then our little barefoot child  
Trod on the cruel snake.

HAKUYŪ.

July 6

## *A Hot Day*

Oita ko ni  
Kami naburaruru  
Atsusa kana.

The heat is hard to bear,  
While baby fingers at my back  
Are playing with my hair.

SONO (a lady).

(SEE NOTE 56)

July 7

## *The River in Summer*

Natsu gawa ya  
Uwo ni toraruru  
Ko tombō.

Fish in the river rise  
This peaceful summer day, and snap  
At little dragon-flies.

SEKKŌ.

51

# JULY

## Young Horses

July 8

Zoro-zoro to

Uma no ko tōru

Natsu no kana.

The colts across the plain  
Trot on behind their mothers, like  
A lady's rustling train.

ROKUTARŌ.

(SEE NOTE 57)

July 9

## A Walk in the Fields

Taka gusa ni

Higasa miye yuku

Natsu no kana.

As through the fields I pass,  
A summer parasol appears  
Above the waving grass.

UNKERŌ.

(SEE NOTE 58)

July 10

## Falling Pine Needles

Ruru mono wa

Matsu no furuba ya

Hikarakasa.

Life's shortness I recall,  
As on an open parasol  
The old pine needles fall.

SHŌGETSU.

(SEE NOTE 58)

July 11

## After the Shower

Yūdachi no

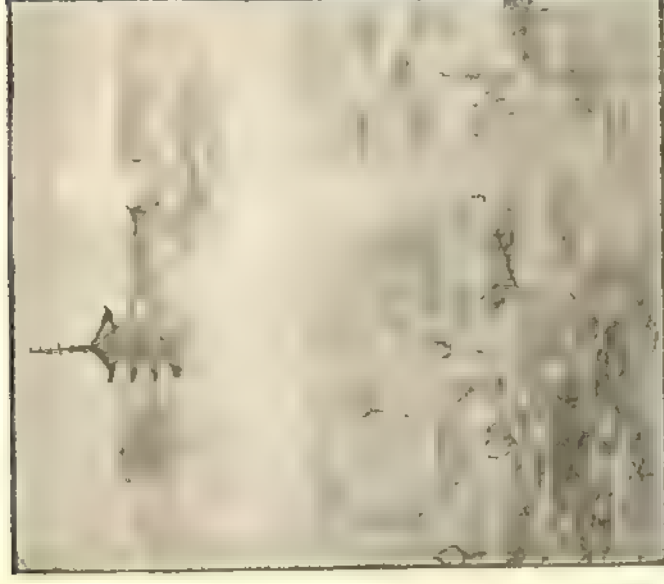
Ato ya mushi naku

Kusa no hara.

The summer shower is o'er,  
And midges hum above the grass  
That grows upon the moor.

CHŌKA.

52



July 15

## A Peaceful Shrine

Bathed in the still moonlight,  
The temple hears the lotus buds  
Burst into bloom to-night.



# JULY

July 12

## Bats

Kawahori ya  
Mizu ye haruka na  
Hashi no ura.

The bats are flitting, look !  
Down in the gloam beneath the bridge,  
Above the water-brook.

SHIBŌ.

July 13

## *The Dew upon the Lotus*

Hikiyosete  
Hasu no tsuyu sū  
Migiwa kana.

Would that my soul could drink  
The dew upon the lotus flower  
Here at the water's brink.

TAIGI.

(SEE NOTE 59)

July 14

## *The Lotus Pond*

Hasu ike ni  
Dai Bursu tatau  
Tateru kana.

Above the lotus pond  
The image of great Buddha stands,  
His gaze fixed far beyond.

HAKUGETSU.

(SEE NOTE 59)

July 15

## *A Peaceful Shrine*

Shira hasu no  
Hiraku oto kaya  
Bō no tsuki.

Bathed in the still moonlight,  
The temple hears the lotus buds  
Burst into bloom to-night.

TEIGETSU.

(SEE NOTE 59)

July 16

*An Ideal*

Hasu ike ya  
Negawaku naraba  
Nagare kawa.

YŪGEN.

Ah ! If one could but make  
A clear and flowing river of  
This stagnant lotus lake !

(SEE NOTE 59)

July 17

*Fireflies and Water-weed*

Mizu-gusa ni  
Narita bana tobu  
Hotaru kana.

TEIJO.

The fireflies in the gloom  
Among the water-weeds are like  
The water-weeds in bloom.

(SEE NOTE 60)

July 18

*A Damp Night*

Nure nagara  
Yuru-yuru tomosu  
Hotaru kana.

SUIKIŪ.

Although the night is damp,  
The little firefly ventures out  
And slowly lights his lamp.

(SEE NOTE 60)

July 19

*The Silent Firefly*

Tobu hotaru  
Nakaba kanashiki  
Koye narame.

TADAYOSHI.

If fireflies could but sing !  
Ah well ! no doubt their song would be  
A melancholy thing.

(SEE NOTE 60)

54

July 20 *The Firefly's Lamp goes out*

Nigeru toki  
Hi wo tsutsumitaru  
Hotaru kana.

RIRIŪ.

The hours flit fast away,  
The firefly hides his tiny lamp  
At the approach of day.

(SEE NOTE 60)

July 21

*A Summer Landscape*

Suzushisa yo  
Ushi no o wo furu  
Kawa no naka.

BANKO.

How cool the cattle seem !  
They love to swish their tails and stand  
Knee-deep within the stream.

July 22

*Horses in the Water*

Tsuki suzushi  
Uma arai iru  
Kawa no oto.

FUSEKI.

I hear the sound to-night  
Of horses splashing in the stream  
Out in the cool moonlight.

July 23

*The Cool of Evening*

Suzushisa ni  
Tsuki mo nemuru ka  
Mizu no naka.

RIŪSUI.

Now, in the evening's cool,  
Even the moon seems sleeping in  
The middle of the pool.

55

# JULY

July 24

## Hot Weather

Kamo gawa ni  
Tamashii nokoru  
Atsusa kana.

The heat is so extreme,  
My heart, what little heart I've got,  
Is in the Wild Duck stream.

SŌHAKU.

(SEE NOTE 61.)

July 25

## A Hot Sun

En ten ni  
Terasaruru chō no  
Hikari kana.

Under these blazing skies  
The sun adds to the brilliance of  
The gay-winged butterflies.

TAIGI.

July 26

## Drought

Ten mutsuki  
Tami no namida ni  
Kunoru beshi.

The land is parched and dry;  
Oh may the people's bitter tears  
Bring rain-clouds by and by.

CHORIŌ.

(SEE NOTE 62.)

July 27

## The Locust

Semi naku ya  
Mikakete tōki  
Mine no tera.

The locust's song to-day  
Recalls our little mountain shrine,  
Alas! so far away.

NIRIŪ.

56

# JULY

July 28

## Neglected Duties

Higurashi ya  
Kyō no ketai wo  
Omou toki.

The locust's evening cry!  
To-day's omissions I recall  
With a regretful sigh.

RIKEL.

(SEE NOTE 63.)

July 29

## The Well Bucket

Asagao ni  
Tsurube torarete  
Morai mizu.

How can I bear to rend  
The creeper round the rope! I must  
Beg water from a friend.

CHIYO (a lady).

(SEE NOTE 64.)

July 30

## Moriwake's Last Poem

Asagao ni  
Kyō wa miyuran  
Waga yo kana.

So soon to pass away  
I'm but a wild convolvulus—  
'A face at break of day'.

MORITAKE.

(SEE NOTE 65.)

July 31

## A Dead Convolvulus

Asagao wa  
Tsuju kawaku kono  
Shibomi keti.

Now that the dew has dried,  
This beautiful convolvulus  
Has withered up and died.

GICHŌ.

57

1

# AUGUST

## *The Bell Insect*

Aug. 4

Suzumushi no  
Naku ya koro-koro  
Tsayu no tama.  
GIÖTAL.

Hark ! The bell insects sing ;  
Or can that music be the chime  
The tinkling dewdrops ring ?  
(SEE NOTE 66)

## *Sea Shells*

Aug. 5

Bon no tsuki  
Kai ni mono kaku  
Nagisa kana.  
KIÖBI.

This month upon the shore  
We write on shells the names of those  
Who will return no more.  
(SEE NOTE 67)

## *The Milky Way*

Aug. 6

Kuro no sode  
Araite hoshi no  
Ama no gawa.  
SÖYO.

My earthly garb, I pray,  
Dip in the River of the Sky,  
And wash its stains away.  
(SEE NOTE 68)

## *Tanabata*

Aug. 7

Shichi seki ya  
Chigo no hitai ni  
Hoshi no kage.  
CHORIÖ.

Upon my baby's head,  
Oh Weaver, and Oh Herdsman stars,  
Abundant blessings shed.  
(SEE NOTE 68)

59

# AUGUST

## [EARLY AUTUMN]

### *Autumn Awakes*

Aug. 1

Mizu no naku  
Koye kiku aki no  
Nezame kana.  
WAKIÜ.

The patter of the rain ;  
The gurgling water-brooks all say  
Autumn's awake again.

### *Fireflies in the Grass*

Aug. 2

Aki no ame  
Kusa no soko naru  
Hotaru kana.  
ISSHÖ.

Safe underneath the grass  
The firefly on an autumn night  
Waits for the rain to pass.

### *An Autumn Butterfly*

Aug. 3

Aki no chö  
Otsuru hi oute  
Kusa gakure.  
TÖGA.

Poor autumn butterfly !  
In vain it chased the setting sun,  
And in the grass must die.

58



# AUGUST

Aug. 8

## Orchids

Ran no kô ya  
Chô no tsabasa ni  
Takinono su.

The orchid perfumes rise,  
Like clouds of incense wafted by  
The wings of butterflies.

BASHÔ.

Aug. 9 *Dewdrops upon the Rice Cups*

Tama dana no  
Meshi ni tsuyu oku  
Yûbe kana.

To-night full well I know  
That all is well, for on the cups  
The tiny dewdrops show.

MEISETSU.

(SEE NOTE 69)

Aug. 10

## A Grey Hair

Tama dana ya  
Shiraga wo hirou  
Zen no uye.

Left on the altar there,  
After the Spirits had their meal,  
I found—just one grey hair!

CHÔSUI.

(SEE NOTE 69)

Aug. 11

## The Welcoming Bell

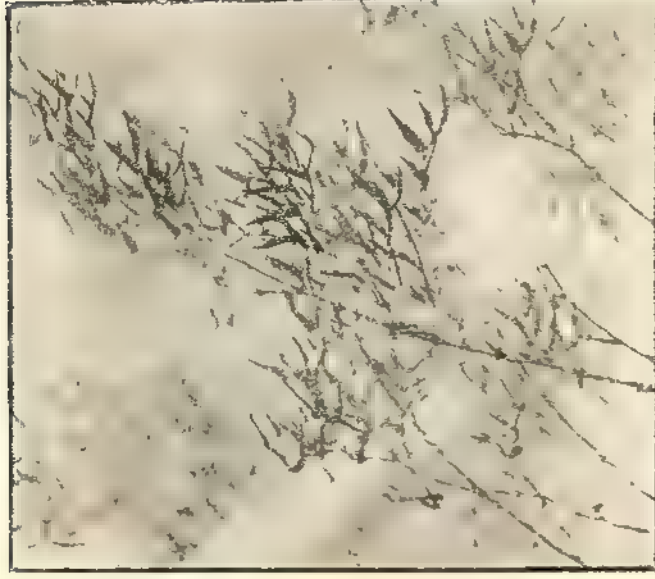
Kotôru wa  
Take no arashi ya  
Mukae kana.

The storm-tossed bamboo head  
Is like a bell to welcome back  
The Spirits of the Dead.

GOCHIKU.

(SEE NOTE 70)

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August 11

## The Welcoming Bell

The storm toss'd bamboo head  
Is like a bell to welcome back  
The Spirits of the Dead.

# AUGUST

Aug. 12      *The Welcoming Fires*  
 Mukae-bi wa      Until the day begin,  
 Kado haku made no      The fires to guide the Spirits back  
 Hikari kana.      Should always be kept in.  
 YASUKICHI.      (SEE NOTE 70)

Aug. 13      *A Mother's Love*  
 Kandô no      A mother goes, 'tis said,  
 Haba ni au yo ya      By stealth at night to greet the soul  
 Bon no tsuki.      That's disinheritied.  
 RYOTA.      (SEE NOTE 71)

Aug. 14      *A Sacred Dance*  
 Odori-ko no      The dance begins anew,  
 Sode ni tsuyu oku      Till daybreak on the dancer's sleeves  
 Yo-ake kana.      Has laid its drops of dew.  
 KWASEN.      (SEE NOTE 72)

Aug. 15      *The Farewell Lights*  
 Okuri-bi mo      When dawn brings back the day,  
 Hakite toritaru      Alas! the Spirit's flick'ring lights  
 Ashita kana.      Must all be cleared away.  
 SHUGEN.      (SEE NOTE 73)

# AUGUST

## Aug. 16 *The Farewell Lights*

Okuri-bi no  
Kusa ni hakanaki  
Hikari kana.

How dimly through the gloam  
The lanterns flicker in the grass,  
To light the Spirits home.

KIYŪ.

(SEE NOTE 73)

## Aug. 17 *Reverie*

Okuri-bi no  
Kiete naniyara  
Omou kana.

At the approach of day,  
When the last Spirit's lamp is out,  
My thoughts are far away.

GOKUDŌ.

(SEE NOTE 74)

## Aug. 18 *Extinguished by the Dew*

Okuri-bi ya  
Tayyu no asagi ni  
Kie nokoru.

The pallid dew, 'tis said,  
Puts out the last few glimmers of  
The lanterns of the Dead.

HAKUYŪ.

(SEE NOTE 73)

## Aug. 19 *The Departure of the Spirits*

Okuri-bi no  
Tsuki ni nari yuku  
Kawabe kana.

This month the people stray  
Down to the river bank to watch  
The Spirits drift away.

MINZŌ.

(SEE NOTE 73)

62

# AUGUST

## Aug. 20 *A Humble Grave*

Tōrō no  
Naki haka hito ni  
Ogamaren.

Full many a tear is shed  
O'er graves unmarked by lamp or stone  
Where sleep the humble dead.

ISSHŌ.

## Aug. 21 *A Mass for the Dead*

Doku-kyō no  
Naka ni tsuki sasu  
Segaki kana.

Moonbeams are softly thrown  
On him, who reads the mass for souls  
With no kin of their own.

BAFŪ.

(SEE NOTE 75)

## Aug. 22 *Benevolence*

Hito-bito no  
Ōgi ugoku ya  
Segaki bune.

By many a fan are blown  
The Spirit boats of those who have  
No kindred of their own.

SEISEL.

(SEE NOTE 75)

## Aug. 23 *Approach of Autumn*

Bon yori zo  
Aki wa aware ni  
Nari ni keru.

The Spirits all have gone,  
And out of pity for our loss  
Sad autumn time draws on.

KEISHI.

63

# AUGUST

## Aug. 24 *On the Death of her Child*

Tombô tsuri      Autumn, and autumn skies !  
 Kyô wa doko made      But where's my laddie, he who chased  
 Ita yara.      The fitting dragon-flies ?  
 CHIYO (a lady).      (SEE NOTE 76)

## Aug. 25 *A Tall Lamp*

Taka tôrô      No longer wraith or ghost,  
 Hiru wa monouki      A tall lamp in the afternoon  
 Hashira kana.      Is but a harmless post.  
 SENNA.      (SEE NOTE 77)

## Aug. 26 *Ghost Lights*

Hito-dama wa      Now the tall lantern's out,  
 Kiete kozue no      And in the graveyard here and there  
 Taka tôrô.      The ghost lights flit about.  
 GENSUI.      (SEE NOTE 77)

## Aug. 27 *Darkness*

Taka tôrô      My lamp's last dying spark  
 Yami hiki-yosete      Has flickered out, and I must face  
 Kie ni kerî.      The terrifying dark !  
 BUNRA.      (SEE NOTE 77)

64

# AUGUST

## Aug. 28 *The Lamp Goes Out*

Taka tôrô      The dew put out the light ;  
 Tsuyu ni shiorette      That must be why this standing lamp  
 Nennuri kerî.      Has dropped asleep to-night.  
 TOSEKI.      (SEE NOTE 77)

## Aug. 29 *A Lamp in the Moonlight*

Neta iye no      Lest it should seem to flout  
 Tôrô aware ni      The brilliance of the moon to-night,  
 Tsuki yo kana.      My lamp has flickered out.  
 MIYAKU.      (SEE NOTE 77)

## Aug. 30 *Sunset at the Temple*

Kane tsuite      The temple acolyte  
 Tôrô tomosu ya      Should never fail to strike the bell  
 Tera otoko.      And light the lamps at night.  
 RIHEI.

## Aug. 31 *The Apparition of Autumn*

Maboroshi no      Autumn itself must die,  
 Aki no yukue ya      The ghostly phantom fades into  
 Aka tombô.      A scarlet dragon-fly.  
 SHIKÔ.      (SEE NOTE 76)

65



# SEPTEMBER

Sept. 4

## *Bush Clover*

Ao sora no  
Asa mo ko hagi no  
Shinogu kana.

A clear blue morning sky,  
And wild bush clover in full bloom,  
Who could complain? Not I.

SHŌNEN.

(SEE NOTE 81)

# SEPTEMBER

[MID AUTUMN]

Sept. 1

## *Autumn Dew*

No mo yama mo  
Tsuyu ni shimereru  
Hazuki kana.

September's here again,  
And thickly lies the morning dew  
Upon both hill and plain.

RIJUN.

(SEE NOTE 78)

Sept. 2

## *The Locust's Song*

Naki tatete  
Tsukutsuku-bōshi  
Shinuru hi zo.

Priest-like the locust sings,  
That brief and transient is the day,  
Like other earthly things.

SŌSEKI.

(SEE NOTE 79)

Sept. 3

## *Destiny*

Mushi koye no  
Hate wa Saga no no  
Karasu kana.

The singing insect's fate?  
For them, like other insects too,  
The crows at Saga wait.

KIGEN.

(SEE NOTE 80)

66

Sept. 5

## *A Weasel in the Clover*

Tasogare ya  
Hagi ni itachi no  
Kōdaiji.

At the Kōdaiji  
The dusk is on the clover, and  
A weasel peeps at me.

BUJON.

(SEE NOTE 82)

Sept. 6

## *Dewdrops on the Clover*

Shira tsuyu mo  
Kobosanu hagi no  
Uneri kana.

The breeze across the plain  
Has waved the wild bush clover, but  
The dewdrops still remain.

BASHŌ.

(SEE NOTE 81)

Sept. 7

## *The White Lotus*

Shira fuyō  
Hachi ni nayameru  
Yūbe kana.

The lotus is in flower,  
And very trying to the bees  
Must be the sunset hour.

KIŌTAL.

67

# SEPTEMBER

## Sept. 8 *The Vanity of Life*

Odori mi no  
Yoru no sudare mo  
Uki yo kana.

This life we leave behind  
Is like the shadow of a dance  
Seen on a window-blind.

GENSUI.

## Sept. 9 *Twilight*

Yama wa kure  
No wa tasogare no  
Susuki kana.

The sun behind the hill  
Has vanished, but the moorland grass  
Waves in the twilight still.

BUSON.

(SEE NOTE 8a)

## Sept. 10 *A Waving Field of Grass*

Hana susuki  
Fukire nagara ni  
Hi wa irinu.

The wind-blown grasses sway ;  
Would that the swiftly setting sun  
A moment more would stay !

OYEMARU.

## Sept. 11 *Long Grass*

Higure made  
Hi no sasu tera no  
Obana kana.

Until the day is done,  
The long grass at the temple gates  
Still points us to the sun.

DŌGEN.

68



September 15

## *The Cry of Wild Geese*

The full moon's perfect ring ;  
The geese, high in the clouds of heaven,  
In one sweet chorus sing.

# SEPTEMBER

Sept. 12

## *Nodding Grass*

Hia yama yoni  
Tsuchi maneki dasu  
Susuki kana.

The long grass nods its head  
Towards the hills, to beg the moon  
To get up out of bed.

GWANSHŌ.

Sept. 13 *Waiting for the Moon to Appear*

Yasu-yasu to  
Idete izayou  
Tsuki no kumo.

I look, but all in vain;  
The moon behind the clouds is slow  
In peeping forth again.

BASHŌ.

(SEE NOTE 83)

Sept. 14

## *Full Moon*

Mei getsu ya  
Tatami no uye ni  
Matsu no kage.

How clear the moonlight's grown!  
The shadow of a spray of pine  
Upon the mat is thrown.

KIKAKU.

(SEE NOTE 84)

Sept. 15

## *The Cry of Wild Geese*

Mei getsu ya  
Ichi koyo kumoru  
Amatsu kari.

The full moon's perfect ring;  
The geese, high in the clouds of heaven,  
In one sweet chorus sing.

KOROKU.

# SEPTEMBER

Sept. 16

## *A Still Night*

Mei getsu ya  
Yoi wa onna no  
Koye bakari.

Across the moonlight clear  
A maiden singing in the night  
Is all the sound I hear.

BOKUSETSU.

Sept. 17 *Moonlight at the Mountain Temple*

Yama dera ni  
Kome tsuku oto no  
Tsuki yo kana.

Up at the mountain shrine  
I hear the sound of pounding rice,  
While soft the moonbeams shine.

ETSUJIN.

Sept. 18

## *Moonlight on the Willows*

Mei getsu ya  
Yanagi no eda wo  
Sora e fuku.

The breezes blow to-night,  
And toss the willow branches up  
To catch the full moonlight.

RANSETSU.

Sept. 19

## *The Autumn Moon*

Matsuge ni mo  
Tsuyu oku aki ya  
Yowa no tsuki.

In autumn, when I view  
The midnight moon, my eyelashes  
Are wet with drops of dew.

KITÔ.

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# SEPTEMBER

Sept. 20

## *A Windy Sky*

Kumo wo harai  
Kumo ni tadayou  
Kaze no tsuki.

When stormy winds blow high,  
Into the clouds the crescent floats—  
Then drives them o'er the sky.

CHORIÔ.

(SEE NOTE 85)

Sept. 21

## *Suma*

At icro no  
Umi no uye nari  
Suma no tsuki.

Suma's the place for me!  
When softly shines the lovely moon  
Upon the deep blue sea.

SHIKI.

Sept. 22

## *The Hum of Insects*

Mei getsu ya  
Kuraki tokoro wa  
Mushi no koye.

Not in the full moonlight,  
But in a dark and shady spot  
The midges buzz at night.

MONSUL.

Sept. 23

## *Sitting up Late to View the Moon*

Mina bito no  
Hiru ne no tane ya  
Aki no tsuki.

Who views the autumn moon,  
He sows the seed which grows into  
A drowsy afternoon.

TEITOKU.

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Sept. 24 *Sitting up Late to View the Moon*

Tsuki ni nenu ya  
All warnings are in vain ;  
Ichi do ni korizu  
I've suffered once, I've suffered twice,  
Ni do ni korizu.  
Yet do the same again.

KIGIN.

Sept. 25 *The Wagtail*

Yo no naka wa  
Life's but a fleeting day ;  
Seki-rei no o no  
The wagtail flicks its tail, and lo !  
Hima mo nashi.  
Our life has passed away.

BONCHŌ.

Sept. 26 *A Wild Goose*

Asa kaze ya  
The morning breezes sigh,  
Tada shira kumo ni  
A single goose sails idly past  
Kari hitotsu.  
Across the cloudy sky.

BASHŌ.

Sept. 27 *An Escort of Wild Geese*

Kari no hara  
High o'er my little boat,  
Mi-okuru sora ya  
Escorting me across the sea,  
Fune no uye.  
A flock of wild geese float.

KIKAKU.

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Sept. 28 *A Flock of Wild Geese*

Hanareji to  
Why do the wild geese cry ?  
Yobi-tsugu koye ka  
To keep the flock from scattering  
Yami no kari.  
Up in the midnight sky ?  
RANKŌ.  
(SEE NOTE 86)

Sept. 29 *Autumn*

Kyō no gwatsu  
Grieve for it as we may,  
Seishi to kiku zo  
The autumn comes for one and all  
Urami nare.  
And sweeps us all away.  
CHIKUTEL.  
(SEE NOTE 87)

Sept. 30 *Autumn Flowers*

Chō tori no  
Beneath the autumn sky  
Shiranu hana ari  
Some blossoms grow, which never see  
Aki no sora.  
A bird or butterfly.  
BASHŌ.

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L

# OCTOBER

## [LATE AUTUMN]

### Oct. 1 *An Autumn Evening*

Mimizuku no  
 Hitori warai ya  
 Aki no kure.  
 The autumn day is done,  
 A single solitary owl  
 Smiles at the setting sun.

KIKAKU.

### Oct. 2 *A Thoughtless Woodpecker*

Kitsutsuki yo  
 Kore wa hana saku  
 Sakura no ki.  
 Woodpecker! pray take care;  
 The spring will clothe that cherry-tree  
 You're busy tapping there.

TÔSÔ.

### Oct. 3 *The Poor Quails*

Taka no me mo  
 Ima ya kurenu to  
 Naku uzura.  
 The quails with mournful cries  
 Complain that nowadays the hawk  
 Ne'er shuts his cruel eyes.

BASHÔ.

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# OCTOBER

## Oct. 4 *Graveyard Lamps*

Asa tsuyu ya  
 Kami no yabureshi  
 Haka tûrô.  
 The heavy dew has torn  
 The paper lanterns on the graves  
 This chilly autumn morn.

RANKÔ.

## Oct. 5 *Travelling in Autumn*

Tabi-bito no  
 Hi wo uchi-kobosu  
 Aki no tsuyu.  
 So thick the dew to-night,  
 In vain the traveller attempts  
 To keep his fire alight.

BUSON.

## Oct. 6 *Girls in the Garden*

Niwa yuku mo  
 Tsuyu ni suso toru  
 Onna kana.  
 Skirts trailing in the dew,  
 The girls around the garden stroll  
 The autumn tints to view.

SHÔNA.

## Oct. 7 *Dew upon the Bamboo*

Sasa no ha no  
 Tsuyu ni oto aru  
 Shiore kana.  
 All voices die away  
 In wonder at the dewdrops on  
 The bamboo leaves to-day.

KIÔKON.

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# OCTOBER

## Oct. 8 *Sunset*

Kare eda ni  
Karasu no tomaru keri  
Aki no kure.

BASHŌ.

The autumn day is done,  
The crows upon a withered branch  
Blink at the setting sun.

(SEE NOTE 88)

## Oct. 9 *Matsushima*

Nami kaze no  
Uye wo wataru ya  
Shika no koye.

SŌA.

This is the spot to hear  
The murmur of the deep sea breeze,  
The crying of the deer.

(SEE NOTE 89)

## Oct. 10 *The Call of the Deer*

Shika naku ya  
Yoi tsuki otsuru  
Yama hikushi.

GEKKŌ.

Sadly the wild deer cry,  
The moon sinks down behind the hill  
And leaves the evening sky.

## Oct. 11 *Mist upon the Maples*

Zen-zen to  
Kiri yori miyuru  
Momiji kana.

SEISEL.

The maple's crimson hue,  
Now that the mist is rolling back,  
Breaks slowly into view.

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# OCTOBER

## Oct. 12 *Sweeping up Fallen Maple Leaves*

Haku oto mo  
Kikoete sabishi  
Yū momiji.

RYŌTA.

'Tis evening calm and clear,  
The rustling of the maple leaves  
Is all the sound I hear.

## Oct. 13 *The Fairies and the Maple Leaves*

Yama-hime no  
Some gara nagasu  
Momiji kana.

KIKAKU.

The fairies, it is said,  
Drop maple leaves into the streams  
To dye their waters red.

## Oct. 14 *Fallen Maple Leaves*

Yo arashi ni  
Nishiki wo nokosu  
Momiji kana.

SHŌKIN.

The storm last night has laid  
A coverlet of maple leaves,  
As gay as red brocade.

## Oct. 15 *The Rabbits and the Chestnuts*

Ochiguri ya  
Usagi no asobu  
Tokoro nashi.

SEIBI.

Where can the rabbits play  
In safety from the chestnut burrs  
That fall so fast to-day?

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# OCTOBER

## Oct. 16 *A Baby's Hand*

Kuri hitotsu  
Nigirite maroki  
Ko no te kana.

One chestnut, only one,  
Is all his tiny hands can hold,  
My little baby son!

GOMEL.

(SEE NOTE 90)

## Oct. 17 *An Early Morning Scene*

Asagiri ni  
Ichi no torii ya  
Nami no oto.

The murmur of the sea,  
And showing through the morning mist  
A single torii.

KIKAKU.

## Oct. 18 *Morning Mist*

Asagiri ya  
Gwa ni kaku yume no  
Hito-tôri.

The mists of daybreak seem  
To paint, as with a fairy brush,  
A landscape in a dream.

BUSON.

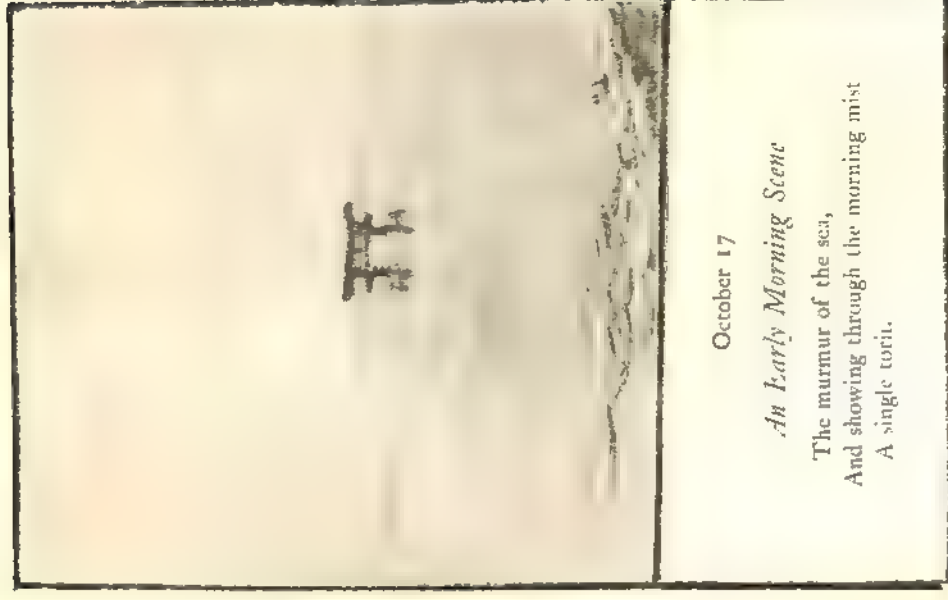
## Oct. 19 *Cobwebs*

Kusa no hara  
Kiri harete kumo  
No i shiroshi.

The mist has rolled away;  
How lovely are the cobweb threads  
Upon the moor to-day!

HAKUYŪ.

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October 17

## *An Early Morning Scene*

The murmur of the sea,  
And showing through the morning mist  
A single torii.

# OCTOBER

## Oct. 20 *A Night Thunder-storm*

Inazuma wo      The lightning-flash so bright  
 Ori-kaeshitaru    Serves only to intensify  
 Kurasu kana.     The blackness of the night.

SEKIRAN.

## Oct. 21 *Ivy*

Tsuta no ha ya    The ivy's stripped and bare ;  
 Nokorazu ugoku   No longer can the autumn wind  
 Aki no kaze.      Blow softly rustling there.

KAKU.

## Oct. 22 *A Cold Wind*

Ko no kao ni      The autumn wind is bleak,  
 Aki kaze shiroshi   It whitens, as with powder-puff,  
 Tenkwafun.       My little baby's cheek.

SHŌHA.

## Oct. 23 *Migrating Birds*

Asa arashi        Across the morning sky,  
 Atama no uye wo   Blown in the forefront of the gale,  
 Watari tori.      The birds of passage fly.

KYORAI.



# OCTOBER

## Oct. 24 *Mount Fuji in Autumn*

Aki kaze no  
Fuki hodo shiroshi  
Fuji no yama.

The winds of autumn blow,  
And mighty Fuji-yama's sides  
Will soon be white with snow.

RIJŌ.

(SEE NOTE 91)

## Oct. 25 *Morning School*

Tera koya no  
Kado utsu ko ari  
Asa samuni.

The morn is cold and bleak,  
And knocking at the schoolroom door  
My boys admission seek.

TAIGI.

## Oct. 26 *A Hurricane*

Fuki tobasu  
Ishi mo Asama no  
Nowaki kana.

The tempests howl and shriek,  
And even stones are blown about  
On Mount Asama's peak.

BASHŌ.

(SEE NOTE 92)

## Oct. 27 *White Chrysanthemums*

Shira kiku ya  
Tsuyu shimo kakaru  
Kage no tsuki.

Chrysanthemums, pure white,  
Are like the moonbeams caught within  
The frosted dew at night.

RANKŌ.

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# OCTOBER

## Oct. 28 *Solitude*

Kono michi ya  
Yuku-bito nashi ni  
Aki no kure.

I dwell here all alone,  
For no one passes by this road  
Now that the autumn's gone.

BASHŌ.

## Oct. 29 *A Crimson Carpet*

Yuku aki wo  
Michi-michi kobosu  
Momiji kana.

Autumn is wellnigh past,  
And maple-trees upon the road  
Their crimson leaves have cast.

OTSUYŪ.

## Oct. 30 *The Passing of Autumn*

Yuku aki no  
Nao tanomoshi ya  
Ao mikan.

The autumn hurries on,  
Ere yet an orange turns to gold  
Its days have passed and gone.

BASHŌ.

## Oct. 31 *In Memory's Ear*

Aoba fuku  
Kaze no na nokoru ya  
Aki no kure.

Autumn has passed away,  
But still I seem to hear the wind  
Among the leaves to-day.

KANGETSU.

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# NOVEMBER

Nov. 4

## Tea Blossoms

Cha no hana ya  
Eshiki sabireshi  
Sato no tera.

When tea plants are in bloom  
Deserted is the village shrine  
And hushed in silent gloom.

KÔRYO.

(SEE NOTE 94)

# NOVEMBER

[EARLY WINTER]

Nov. 1

## A Damp Evening

Hane omoki  
Shôji no mushi ya  
Yû shigure.

Wet with the evening rain,  
A little fly with heavy wings  
Crawls slowly up the pane.

HEKISANSU!

Nov. 2

## A Fly in Winter Time

Fuyu no hai  
Ha wo tanomite hi  
Minami ou.

Now that the autumn's done,  
The poor fly, trusting to its wings,  
Flies south to catch the sun.

SHISEN.

Nov. 3

## The Emperor's Birthday

Ko tori naki  
Momiji kiku matsu  
Kokki kana.

Little birds sing to say  
Pine, maple, and chrysanthemum  
Should be our flag to-day.

BAKUJIN.

(SEE NOTE 93)

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Nov. 6

## Blossoms of the Loquat

Itsu saite  
Yume chiru yaran  
Biwa no hana.

Oh loquat! tell me, pray,  
When will your lovely blossoms bloom?  
When will they fade away?

SHÔHAKU.

Nov. 7

## A Second Blossoming

Haru no yo no  
Yume mite saku ya  
Kaeri bana.

My dream of spring came true;  
For, see! upon the trees and plants  
The buds burst forth anew.

CHÏYO (a lady).

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Nov. 8 *Foxes Playing in the Moonlight*

Suisen ni           The moon is shining bright,  
Kitsune asobu ya   And round my white narcissus beds  
Yoi taiki yo.       The foxes play all night.

BUSON.

(SEE NOTE 95)

Nov. 9 *A Glimpse of Sun*

Tori nagara       Like autumn leaves, the sky  
Hi no chiru sora ya   Still scatters sunshine here and there,  
Hatsu arashi.       Though storm clouds gather nigh.

SHŌSAN.

Nov. 10 *In Memory of the Poet Sōgi*

Yo ni chiredo       A fallen leaf is dead !  
Jigoku e ochinu     But after death the leaves have got  
Ko no ha kana.      No gates of Hell to dread.

SŌKAN.

Nov. 11 *An Image of Buddha*

Kogarashi ya       The tempests shriek and wail ;  
Dai Butsu dono wa   But Buddha 's deaf, he cannot hear  
Mimishi nari.       The howling of the gale.

SHUKI.

Nov. 12 *Fallen Leaves and Blossoms*

Chiru oto wa       With harsh and rustling sound  
Hana mo oyobanu   The dead leaves fall—the petals drop  
Ko no ha kana.     In silence to the ground.

MORITAKE.

Nov. 13 *A Heap of Dead Leaves*

San shaku no       Swept up into a heap,  
Yama mo arashi no   The storm-blown leaves of autumn make  
Ko no ha kana.      A hillock three feet deep.

BASHŌ.

Nov. 14 *The Sound of a Far-away Bell*

Kane tsuku wa      From the far-distant town  
Tonari mura nari    The faint sound of a bell has brought  
Chiru ko no ha.     The dead leaves fluttering down.

SAEJINON.

Nov. 15 *Dead Leaves in the Garden*

Momo tose no       A hundred years and more,  
Keshiki no niwa no   Each year has cast its withered leaves  
Ochiba kana.       My little garden o'er.

BASHŌ.

# NOVEMBER

## Nov. 16 *Rain on the Fallen Leaves*

Hara-hara to  
Oto shite sabishi  
Ame ochiba.  
      'Tis but a dismal sound,  
      When raindrops patter down upon  
      The dead leaves on the ground.

KAEN.

## Nov. 17 *An Image of Buddha*

Dai Butsu ui  
Asahi hiyatashi  
Fuyu ko dachi.  
      The trees their leaves have shed,  
      And cold the rising sunlight shines  
      Upon Great Buddha's head.

CHŪSAI.

## Nov. 18 *The First Snow*

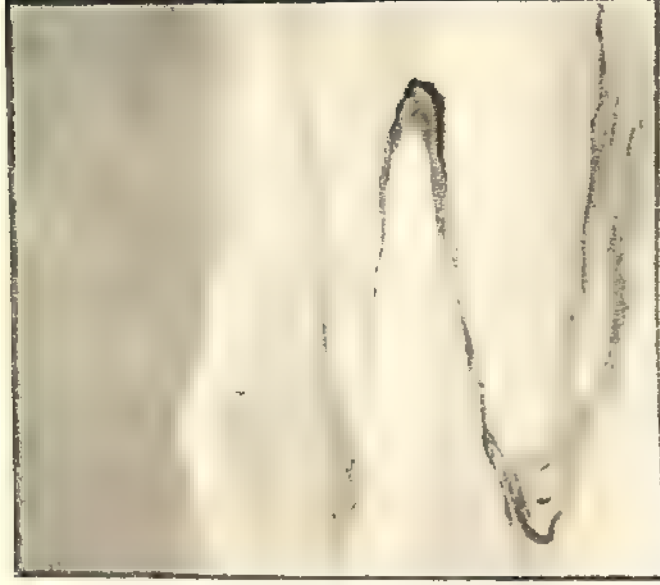
Hatsu yuki ya  
Suisen no ha no  
Tawamu hodo.  
      Winter is here, and low  
      Droop the poor frail narcissus leaves  
      Under their weight of snow.

BASHŌ.

## Nov. 19 *The Beautiful Snow*

Hatsu yuki ya  
Ogamu asahi wo  
Wasuretari.  
      The snow fell in the night,  
      And I forgot my morning prayer,  
      So lovely is the sight!

SŌSEN.



November 20

## *A Snow Landscape*

The river winds below,  
A single streak across the plain  
White with the fallen snow.

# NOVEMBER

Nov. 20

## *A Snow Landscape*

Naga-naga to  
Kawa hito suji ya  
Yuki no hara.

The river winds below,  
A single streak across the plain  
White with the fallen snow.

BONCHÔ.

Nov. 21

## *Snow upon the Crows' Nests*

Ne-dokoro no  
Matsu ni yuki furu  
Karasu kana.

The heavy winter snows  
Have capped with white the pine-tree tops,  
Where sleep the big black crows.

RIMEI.

Nov. 22

## *The Warming Bird*

Nukune dori  
Ichi yo chitose to  
Omoi keri.

Each night, one almost fears,  
To the poor bird that warms the hawk  
Is like a thousand years.

ICHYŪ.

(SEE NOTE 96)

Nov. 23

## *The Warming Bird*

Nukune dori  
Fuyu no yo akete  
Inochi kana.

The winter dawn, though dim,  
Is welcomed by the warming bird,—  
It means fresh life to him.

SENSEKI.

(SEE NOTE 96)



# NOVEMBER

## *Withered Grass*

Nov. 24

Tomotakumo  
Narade ya yuki no  
Kare obana.

Killed by the great snowfall,  
All dead and withered lies the grass  
That lately waved so tall.

BASHŌ.

## *The Absent Gods*

Nov. 25

Rusu no ma ni  
Aretaru kami no  
Ochiba kana.

The Gods are far away,  
And see, around their sacred shrine  
The leaves fall fast to-day.

BASHŌ.

(SEE NOTE 97)

## *The Rats Keep Guard*

Nov. 26

Kami dana ni  
Rusu azukareru  
Nezumi kana.

Afar the Spirits roam,  
And nothing but the rats are left  
To guard my little home.

KISEKI.

(SEE NOTE 97)

Nov. 27

Naki mono wa  
Karasu bakari ka  
Yuki tsuki yo.

Who calls across the snow  
This mystic moonlight night? Alas!  
'Twas nothing but a crow.

SARUSUKUL

(SEE NOTE 98)

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N

# NOVEMBER

## *Bashō on his Approaching End*

Nov. 28

Tabi ni yande  
Yume wa kare no wo  
Kake-neguru.

Nearing my journey's end,  
In dreams I trudge the wild, waste moor,  
And seek a kindly friend.

BASHŌ.

(SEE NOTE 99)

## *Snow on the Water-wheel*

Nov. 29

Isogashiki  
Yuki no tamari ya  
Mizu-guruma.

The ever-busy snow  
Collects upon the water-wheel,  
To try and make it go.

CHIKUYŪ.

## *In Memory of Bashō*

Nov. 30

Kono tsuka no  
Hōki ni oran  
Kare obana.

At Bashō's grave to-day  
I plucked a bunch of withered grass,  
And swept the dust away.

GOMEI.

89

## DECEMBER

### [MID WINTER]

Dec. 1

#### *Welcoming the Snow*

Kono yuki ni  
Mukai ni okosu  
Hito mo hito.

The snow fell in the night,  
And people rouse each other up  
To see the lovely sight.

KANSETSU.

Dec. 2

#### *A Snow Landscape*

Izasaraba  
Yuki mi ni korobu  
Tokoro made.

Come out ! come out with me !  
'Tis worth a tumble in the snow  
The wondrous sight to see.

BASHŌ.

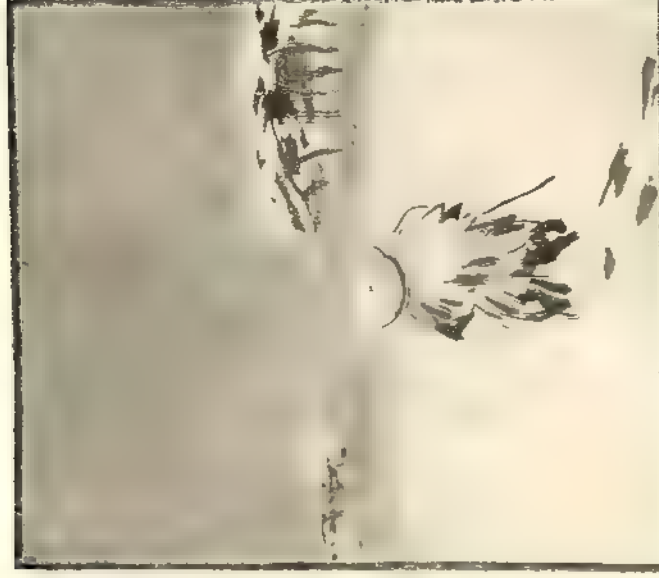
Dec. 3

#### *The Devils and the Snow*

Yuki sora ya  
Akuma mo ude wo  
Idasu beku.

Even the devils know  
And lift their hands in wonder at  
The beauty of the snow.

KYORAI.



December 7

#### *A Fall of Snow*

As men pass to and fro,  
Their footprints mar the beauty of  
The pure unbroken snow.

# DECEMBER

## Dec. 4 . . . *A Ray of Comfort*

Furi tomu ya  
Yuki ni hi tomoru  
Mine no tera.

Clear from the hill-top high  
The temple lamp shines down to say,  
The snow will soon pass by.

SHIKI.

(SEE NOTE 100)

## Dec. 5 *The Sleeping Mountains*

Futon kite  
Netaru sugata ya  
Higashi yama.

The Eastern Mountain chain  
Has spread its coverlet of snow,  
And dropped asleep again.

RANSETSU.

(SEE NOTE 101)

## Dec. 6 *A Frozen River*

Fuyu kawa ya  
Kaze ni fukaruru  
Mizu-guruma.

Hard frosts the rivers seal,  
And now there's nothing but the wind  
To turn the water-wheel.

GOMEI.

## Dec. 7 *A Fall of Snow*

Ato tsukeba  
Hito ya uramin  
Yuki no uye.

As men pass to and fro,  
Their footprints mar the beauty of  
The pure unbroken snow.

YAYŪ.

# DECEMBER

## Dec. 8 *A Traveller Caught in a Storm*

Uma shikaru      Across the storm-swept plain  
Koye mo kare no no      The rider urges on his horse  
Arashi kana.      In squalls of wind and rain.

KIOKUSUI

## Dec. 9 *The Widow*

Yû karasu      To-night the poor crow flies  
Naku-naku kaeru      Alone across the desert moor  
Kare no kana.      With many mournful cries.

TEIU.

(SEE NOTE 102)

## Dec. 10 *The Solitary Priest*

Hitori yuku      A priest, forlorn and poor,  
Sô ni ame furu      Mid heavy rain still struggles on  
Kare no kana.      Across the wild, waste moor.

SHÛSHOKU.

(SEE NOTE 103)

## Dec. 11 *A Winter Night*

Ichiro mo      A cold and frosty night ;  
Ugoku mono naki      The sleeping world lies motionless,  
Shimo yo kana.      All silent, and all white.

YASUI.

92

# DECEMBER

## Dec. 12 *Snow-flake Blossoms*

Kô no araba      A scent is all they need,  
Mizu-gusa karan      And then the flakes of snow would be  
Yuki no hana.      True water-flowers indeed !

GENSATSU.

(SEE NOTE 104)

## Dec. 13 *Hoar-frost*

Wara yane ni      This bright and sunny morn  
Shimo miru asa no      The hoar-frost jewels flashing bright  
Hiyori kana.      My cottage thatch adorn.

RIGIÛ.

## Dec. 14 *Hoar-frost Blossoms*

Kare-gusa ni      The hoar-frost in the night  
Shimo no hana saku      Will deck the dry and withered grass  
Ashita kana.      With blossoms pure and white.

SHIGEN.

## Dec. 15 *A Wintry Landscape*

Ki mo kusa mo      The trees are frozen deep  
Ima wo kôru ya      In snowy garb, and now and then  
Ne dori naku.      A bird chirps in its sleep.

KIKUMEI.

93

# DECEMBER

## Winter Pilgrimage

Dec. 16

Michi itete  
Hadashi mairi no  
Tōri keru.

SHIKI.

Through bitter frost and snow,  
Along the path of misery  
The barefoot pilgrims go.

(SEE NOTE 105)

## Dec. 17 Hail on the Pine Trees

Ikameshiki  
Oto ya arare no  
Hinoki kasa.

BASHŌ.

The hail falls pitter pat,  
And fiercely rattles down upon  
The brave old pine-tree's hat.

(SEE NOTE 106)

Dec. 18

Kaya no kara  
Usagi oi-dasu  
Arare kana.

RIŪKŌ.

## A Hail-storm

The hail beats down again,  
A hunted hare bursts from the reeds  
And races o'er the plain.

## Dec. 19 A Glimpse of Sun in Winter

Kaomise ya  
Shibaraku fuyu no  
Hatsu hi-kage.

KITŌ.

'Tis winter time, and now  
The sun peeps out a moment, just  
To make a formal bow.

(SEE NOTE 107)

94

# DECEMBER

## Dec. 20 A Heavy Snowfall

Ō yuki ya  
Yuki wo mi ni yuki-  
-Dokoro nashi.

KIU.

Now all the world is white,  
But where is one to find a spot  
To view the lovely sight?

(SEE NOTE 108)

## Dec. 21 A Village in Winter

Fuyugare no  
Sato wo mi-orosu  
Tōge kana.

SHŌHA.

In winter time alas!  
How cold and bleak the village looks,  
Seen from the mountain pass.

Dec. 22

Yasu-yasu to  
Matsu ni asahi no  
Tōji kana.

SEIMI.

## The Sun in Winter

The sun, when autumn's fled,  
Climbs slowly, slowly o'er the pines,  
As loath to leave its bed.

Dec. 23

Hi no mizu no  
Aridake kōru  
Keshiki kana.

BONCHŌ.

## A Frozen Landscape

O'er all the landscape's face  
Each glint of sun is frozen, and  
Of water every trace.

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# DECEMBER

## Dec. 24 *The Ravages of Time*

Osoreshi ya  
Onna no me kagami  
Toshi no kure,  
At the year's end, alas!  
The bravest woman does not dare  
To look into her glass.

SHINTOKU.

## Dec. 25 *On-coming Old Age*

Yuku toshi ya  
Oya ni shiraga wo  
Kakushi keru.  
Another year has flown;  
I must not let my parents see  
How grey my hair has grown.

ETSUJIN.

(SEE NOTE 109)

## Dec. 26 *New Year Approaches*

Rai nen wa  
Rai nen wa tote  
Kure ni keru.  
Now the New Year draws on,  
But soon, alas! the coming year  
Will be the year that's gone.

ROSEN.

## Dec. 27 *Longing for the Spring*

Yuku toshi ya  
Kusuri ni mitaki  
Ume no hana,  
The year is nearly o'er,  
And it will do me good to see  
The plums in bloom once more.

BASHŌ.

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# DECEMBER

## Dec. 28 *Merriment*

Toshi wasure  
Utawau hito wo  
Odorasen.  
A dance will clear away  
The troubles of the year that's flown,  
But sing no songs to-day.

TATSE.

(SEE NOTE 110)

## Dec. 29 *The End of the Year*

Sama-zana ni  
Kure yuku toshi no  
Ichi hi kana.  
The last day of the year  
Departs in many different ways  
For different men, I fear.

SHIKŌ.

(SEE NOTE 111)

## Dec. 30 *Good Wishes*

Medetasa no  
Kazu ni mo iran  
Toshi no kure.  
The year draws to its end;  
Abundant joy and happiness  
To each and every friend.

BASHŌ.

## Dec. 31 *The Capital at the Year's End*

Tomoshibi mo  
Hana no miyako ya  
Ō misoka.  
The old year's passed away;  
The Capital from end to end  
With flowers and lights is gay.

RANKŌ.

97

0

## THE WRITERS OF THE VERSES<sup>1</sup>

By far the greatest composer of *haikai* verses was Matsō Tōsei, who is generally known by his literary name of Bashō. Born in 1643 at Takushoku in the Province of Iga, he belonged to the samurai class; his eldest brother was a teacher of writing, his next brother was a warrior in the service of the Daimyō Tōdō Nagamoto, and Bashō himself served the Daimyō Tōdō Ryose, or rather the Daimyō's son, Yoshitada. The two composed verses together and became devotedly attached to each other, Yoshitada writing under the name of Sengin. But the latter soon died, and Bashō, almost heart-broken, begged the Daimyō to release him from his service; this was refused, and Bashō escaped, taking with him a lock of Yoshitada's hair, which he carried to Mount Kōya, in Kinshū Province, and deposited it in the temple of Kōbō Daishi, where to-day Bashō's own monument stands.

He then began his travels on foot through the country, living chiefly in the temples, composing poetry, and studying the mysteries of Zen Buddhism, a sect which aims at reaching through meditation stages of thought beyond verbal expression.

He studied under the poet Kigin in Kyōto, and strove by

<sup>1</sup> Taken chiefly from *Hōkoku Teshōkei*, *Hanku Kosen Shinron*, and Professor Chamberlain's paper on 'Bashō and the Japanese Epigram'.

his verses to teach ethics, morality, and enlightenment; and in 1673 we find him with a few followers at Fukagawa in Yêdo living a simple life of studious retirement in a tiny cottage in the garden of Sompû, who became one of his disciples. His garden was laid out in strict accordance with the rules and tenets of Japanese gardening, and contained a small pond, which gave rise to his most famous verse (see March 7). His students also planted a banana-tree there, and the house came to be called *Bashô-an* (Banana House), and this name he adopted as his *nom de plume*.

An account of the severe simplicity of his life has been left by a friend who visited him, and found his two pupils Ransetsu and Kikaku living with him in a room only twelve feet square, whose sole furniture consisted of an image of Buddha, one pan and one kettle. They possessed but one rug, which they shared, and which was not long enough to cover their feet at night; and when kept awake by the cold, they would get up, walk about and compose verses.

The little cottage was burnt down in a great conflagration in 1683, when Bashô only managed to save his life by taking refuge in the pond in the garden. From that date he spent the rest of his life, accompanied by a few disciples, on pilgrimage, visiting temples, mountains, forests, rivers, waterfalls, battlefields, historical scenes, &c., ever trying to realize the Buddhist ideals of wisdom, purity, simplicity, and kindness to animals, and to teach them to others by his poetry.

Dr. Aston gives a characteristic sketch of an incident in his wanderings in his *Japanese Literature*, from which I extract the following:—

“Once, when on his travels, Bashô passed through a certain rural district, making *haikai* as he went along. It was full

moon. The whole sky was flooded with light, so that it was clearer than noonday. It was so bright that Bashô did not think of seeking an inn, but continued his journey. In a certain village he came upon a party of men who had brought out *saké* and something to eat with it into the open air, and were enjoying the moonlight. Bashô stood still to watch them. Presently they fell to composing *haikai*. Bashô was greatly pleased to see that this elegant accomplishment was practised even in so remote a place and continued looking on, when a silly fellow of the party noticed him and said, ‘There is a priest who looks like a pilgrim. He may be a begging priest, but, never mind, let us invite him to join us.’ They all thought this would be great fun. Bashô could not refuse, so he joined their circle, taking the lowest seat. The silly fellow then said to him, ‘Everybody here is bound to compose something about the full moon. You must compose something too.’ Bashô apologized. He said he was a humble individual, belonging to a country place. How should he contribute to the entertainment of the honourable company? He begged, therefore, that they would kindly excuse him. ‘No! No!’ said they, ‘we can’t excuse you. Good or bad, you must compose one verse at least.’ They urged him until at last he consented. Bashô smiled, folded his arms, and, turning to the clerk of the party, said, ‘Well, I will give you one’;—

‘Twas the new moon—’

‘The new moon! What a fool the priest is!’ cried one, ‘the poem should be about the full moon.’ ‘Let him go on,’ said another, ‘it will be all the more fun.’ So they gathered round, and mocked and laughed at him. Bashô paid no attention, but went on:—

## THE WRITERS OF THE VERSES

'Twas the new moon !  
 Since then I waited—  
 And lo ! to-night !  
 [I have my reward.]'

The whole party were amazed. They took their seats again and said, 'Sir, you can be no common priest to write such a remarkable verse. May we ask your name?' Bashō smilingly replied, 'My name is Bashō, and I am travelling about on a pilgrimage for the sake of practising the art of *haikai*.' The rustics, in great excitement, apologized for their rudeness to an eminent man, 'whose fragrant name was known to all the world.' They sent for their friends who were interested in *haikai*, and began their *al fresco* feast anew in his honour."

Bashō died in 1694 at Ōsaka. He was staying in the house of the poetess Sono, and ate some mushroom, which brought on a severe illness. He took medicine, but only got worse, and his pupils Shikō and Inen wished to send for a good doctor; but Bashō said that no doctor would understand him as well as his friends Kyorai and Bokusetsu. They were accordingly sent for, and came as fast as possible from Kyōto; and, as the house proved too small to accommodate them all, Bashō was moved to a house called 'Hanaya', belonging to Nizaimon. It is related that Shikō, realizing that the end was not far off, suggested the expediency of collecting together all Bashō's verses into a book. But Kyorai, indignant that such a thing should be said in the sick man's hearing, rebuked him forcibly, and Shikō retired crestfallen into the next room. Here he composed the verse:—

Shikararete                    Justly you censured me  
 T'sugi no ma ni tatsu        And I withdrew; but ah! how chill  
 Samusa kana.                An outer room can be.

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## THE WRITERS OF THE VERSES

This was repeated to Bashō, who still had strength enough to smile at it. He lingered for a couple of weeks surrounded by his pupils, who nursed him with every care, but he died on Nov. 28 and was buried two days later on the shores of Lake Biwa, leaving behind him his ten disciples, or 'The Ten Wits', as they were called, to carry on his teaching.

## THE TEN WITS

KIKAKU, whose other name was Hōshinsei, was born at Yedo in 1661. He lived a somewhat wild Bohemian life, and is said to have composed some of his best verses when more or less intoxicated with *sake*. He died in 1707, leaving a school of poetry called Yedo-za, which still exists.

RANSETSU, whose other name was Secchuan, was born at Mihara in the Island of Awaji in 1654, and came to Yedo in the service of his lord Inouye Sagami. He founded the school of Setsumon and died in 1707.

SHIKŌ, whose other name was Shishian, was born in the year 1665 in the Province of Mino. He lived for the most of his life at Yamada in Ise Province, and died at his old home in Mino in 1731.

KIOROKU, whose other names were Gorō and Kikuabutsu, was a samurai of Kijō in Ōmi Province. He was famous as a painter as well as a writer of verses, and died in 1715.

JŌSŌ was born in 1663, and was a priest and a distinguished poet of Owari. He died in 1704.

KYORAI, whose other name was Rakushisa, was born 1651 in Hizen Province. He moved to Kyōto, which was then the capital, and died in 1704.

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## THE WRITERS OF THE VERSES

YABA was born in 1663 at Etsuzen, and followed his teacher Bashō to Yedo, where he died in 1740.

HOKUSHI belonged to Kanazawa in Kaga. He was by trade a cutter and polisher of jewels, and he died in 1718.

SAMPŪ, whose other name was Sugiyama, was born at Yedo in 1648. He was a seller of fish and birds, and helped his teacher Bashō to spread his school of poetry. He died in 1733.

ETSUJIN, whose family name was Saburi, was born at Kumanoto in Higo Province, and was very famous in the use of the spear.

### SOME OF THE OTHER WRITERS

BOKUSETSU was a friend of Bashō's, and helped to nurse him in his last illness.

BONCHŌ was famous as a painter of birds and flowers, as well as a *hokku* writer; he lived about 150 years ago.

BUSON was a well-known painter and a master of *haikai*, some admirers preferring his verses to Bashō's. After the latter's death, writers began to pay attention chiefly to the sound of the words, and neglected all thought and feeling; Buson devoted his energies to correct this and to elevate the style. He died in 1783, aged 67.

CHIGETSU was a poetess, who studied under Bashō; she lived 1634-1706.

CHŪYO, whose other name was Kaga, was the greatest of all lady *hokku* writers; she sometimes also wrote under the name of Sōen, and she lived 1703-75.

GIŌTAI, 1731-91.

Gojō is a modern writer, who is still living.

## THE WRITERS OF THE VERSES

ISSA was a farmer in the Province of Shinshū, who followed Bashō's precepts of kindness to animals to such an extent that it was said he would not even kill a flea. He lived 1763-1827.

KICIN, whose other name was Kitamura, lived 1624-1711. He was Bashō's teacher of poetry, and he himself studied under Matsunaga Teitoku.

KIOKUSUI died in 1720.

MEISETSU is a modern writer, who is still living.

MORITAKE, whose other name was Arakida, was a Shintō priest, who lived 1472-1549.

ONITSUKA was a very famous *hokku* writer, and a friend of Bashō's. He lived 1661-1738.

OTSUYŪ died in 1739.

RAIZAN, 1654-1716.

RANKŌ, 1728-99.

RITŌ died in 1755.

RYŌTA was head of the Setsumon school of poetry, founded by Ransetsu, one of the Ten Wits. He lived 1719-87.

RYŌTO was the head of the Ise school of poetry, and lived 1660-1717.

SHIKI was the great *hokku* writer of modern times; he did for the Meiji period what Buson did for his day, raising and purifying the style. He died about 1902.

SHIRŌ, 1736-1812.

SHŌHA died in 1600.

SHŌHAKU, 1444-1527.

SHŌSAN, whose real name was Yoshitaka Miyake, was born March 25, 1718, in Kyōto, and died April 14, 1801. He was a great Chinese scholar, deeply read, but, being of a retiring



## THE WRITERS OF THE VERSES

nature, he made few friends, and never attempted to keep up the dignity to which his learning entitled him. He was the chief collector of *Haikai Kosen Shinsen*, and did not relax his studies even in his old age.

SHAUNSU, who was also called Meishin, was a painter and a famous *haiku* writer.

SŌN, whose other name was Nishiyama, was born in 1605. He came to Yedo in 1664 and founded the Danrin school of poetry, which was noted for ingenious word jugglery (see the verse for March 25). He travelled extensively through the land, and died in 1682.

SŌKAN, whose other name was Yamazaki, was a Zen Buddhist priest, who was born in 1465 and died in 1553. He made the first collection of *haikai* verses.

SŌNO, a poetess, was born in 1665 and died in 1726. She was the pupil of Mitsun, and it was in her house that Bashō was taken ill before he died.

SUTE was another poetess, who lived 1635-98.

TAICU was a contemporary of Shōsan's, and helped him in compiling the more modern verses in *Haikai Kosen Shinsen*.

TEISHITSU, 1608-71, was the pupil of Teitoku, from whom he took the first part of his literary name, and a writer of great renown. But his modesty was so great, that he used to say he had only written three verses that were really good; one of them was the verse I have put down for April 3, which Bashō once pronounced to be the best *haiku* ever written.

TEITOKU, whose other name was Matsunaga, lived 1571-1653. He numbered among his pupils Kigin and Teishitsu; his verses are famous for euphony rather than for any great depth of meaning.

## THE WRITERS OF THE VERSES

YAVŪ, whose other name was Yokoi, was born in 1702. He was famous as a horseman and a master of the sword and bow. He was a great friend of Shōsan's, and, when the latter was compiling *Haikai Kosen Shinsen*, he sent him as a contribution the verse I have put down for Dec. 7, with a message that he was glad to have lived long enough to be able to do this. He died soon after in 1783.

The following additional writers, although I have been unable to ascertain their dates, lived at least a hundred years ago, as their names appear in *Haikai Kosen Shinsen*, which was compiled by Shōsan, who died in 1801.

BANKO	KIGAN	NIRIU	SEKIRAN	SUIRIŪ
BUKAKU	KIGEN	ŌSEN	SEXTU	TADAYOSHI
CHARAI	KIHŌ	REIKAN	SENNA	TANDAN
CHIKUTEI	KIN	RIGIŪ	SHADŌ	TEIJO
CHIKUYŪ	KŌKON	RIJŌ	SHAGIŪ	TEU
DEMPUKU	KISEN	KIMEI	SHIBŌ	TOGA
GENSAISU	KITO	RIŌRIŪ	SHIGEN	TŌRIN
GENSUI	KIUKOKU	RIKIU	SHINTOKU	TOSEKI
GINA	KODŌ	RIU	SHŪSEN	TSURU (a lady)
ISSHŌ	KORIŪ	RIUKIO	SŌA	UNGIO
JŌBOKU	KOYŪ	RIUMIN	SŌHAKU	UUN
KARN	MIYOSHI	RIUSUI	SŌOKU	WAKTŪ
KAKU	MONSUI	ROSEN	SŌSEN	YASUI
KAKO	NAGANOI	SARUKUI	SŌYO	YŪGEN
KEIBA	NIŌGIŌ	SEIGA		

## NOTES

the signs of the zodiac, the day of the Rat being the first. This system is said to have been in vogue in China as far back as the second century A.D. The first Rat day of the year was kept as a holiday, when pleasure excursions were made to root up young pine-trees, in order to secure long life—the pine-tree being one of the recognized emblems of longevity. The translation of the second of these two verses is not very satisfactory, as kissing is not a Japanese custom, and is quite foreign to their literature. A literal translation is 'On the first day of the Rat even the pine-trees laugh and embrace each other.' Perhaps, as these verses are so compressed, we might understand *hara wo*, meaning the pines 'hold their sides with laughter'.

### 6

Jan. 14. The pine-tree stands for hardy manhood, and the snow for life's hardships. As an instance of *Renga* (see Introduction), this verse has been cleverly capped—

Matsu wa midori no And peeping through the snow is seen  
Iro masari tsutsu. The pine-tree's colour, fresh and green.

### 7

Jan. 15, 16. *Uzumiji* means a fire smouldering in the ashes. These are two verses on the same subject by Bashō and his disciple Kioroku, both of them famous *haikai* writers of their day, Bashō being the acknowledged master of the seventeen-syllable metre.

### 8

Jan. 17. A cricket chirping is always associated with cold weather to a Japanese mind.

### 9

Jan. 18. *Shōya* is the first watch of the night, from 10 to 12 p.m.

### 10

Jan. 20. The warrior striding on through the snow in front suddenly misses his little sword-bearer, and looking

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## NOTES

### 1

Jan. 2. *Utaï-some* was the ceremony of singing an operatic song for the first time in the year, which was held on the second day of the first month (o. c.).

### 2

Jan. 4. An image in the open air, such as this, is called *Nure Dotoke*, 'a wet God.'

### 3

Jan. 6-8. *Kan-ne-Butsu* is a pilgrim, who, in order to expiate some offence or to gain merit, goes on pilgrimage in winter to some Buddhist temple, travelling mostly by night, often bare-footed, and ringing a bell as he goes. In the second verse, if *nari-yuku* is taken as one word, the meaning is as given in the translation, 'the narrow way' being used by Buddhists exactly in the same sense in which we use it. But if read as two words, the verse would read, 'The sound (of a bell) I hear going along the narrow country lane is that of a midnight pilgrim.'

### 4

Jan. 10. *Saku-raku* is supposed to represent the crisp sound of a horse crunching hay or straw. This verse and the one following give a good impression of the silence of a snowy winter's night.

### 5

Jan. 12, 13. *Ne no hi* is literally 'the day of the Rat'. In the old days the Japanese used the Chinese twelve-day period, instead of the week; each day was called after one of

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## NOTES

back finds that he has tumbled head over heels out of sight into a snow-drift, having tripped perhaps over the long two-handed sword he was carrying. This is one of the few *hokku* verses I have come across that have a distinctly humorous touch.

11

Jan. 26. Snow here stands for the hardships of life; compare the Japanese saying *Tuki no hate wa Nahan*, 'After the snow comes Nirvana.' *Chira-chira to* represents a glittering, dazzling, piled-up mass of snow.

12

Jan. 27. Perhaps it is hardly necessary to say that the word 'Jericho' does not occur in the original; *yosa* means a foreign country, somewhere abroad, in fact anywhere but here.

13

Jan. 28. The hawk typifies relentless cruelty, and is here contrasted with the peaceful scene at sunset.

14

Jan. 29. *Kambai* is the early blossoming plum, literally 'cold (weather) plum', and has special reference here to *hito no samusa*—the coldness of mankind.

15

Feb. 4. *Osibiroi* is powder-puff, and the verse may also mean that in early spring the snow-fall is so light, that there are only little patches of it left on the ground; just as when very little girls try to powder their faces, they are not sufficiently careful to lay it evenly, but give a dab here and there.

16

Feb. 9. Notice the sound of the second line. *Ki kage* means the shadow of the trees, but *ki kage* can mean either sunshine or sun-shadow. The compiler of *Haiku Ichiman*, from which I take the verse, adds in a note that you may also imagine patches of snow in the shadow of the grave-stones.

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## NOTES

17

Jan. 9-Feb. 10. All trees in Japan are considered to have spirits of their own; but a willow, especially an old willow, is said to be a goblin tree, whose spirit walks about and takes other forms, often that of a beautiful young girl.

18

Feb. 11-Apr. 1. Plum blossom and cherry blossom, as all the world knows, are particularly admired in Japan, but the fruit is very poor and of no account. The plum, coming first, is often called 'the elder brother of the flowers', and is sometimes used to typify the moral excellence of a girl, while the cherry stands for her physical beauty; an old plum-tree, gnarled and twisted with age, is contrasted with the youth of its buds. The cherry is the national flower of the land, and symbolizes courtesy and knightliness; an old proverb says, 'As the cherry is first among flowers, so the warrior should be first among men.'

19

Feb. 12. This verse may possibly be meant to picture five jinnicks waiting in a row, after having deposited their occupants who have come to admire the white plums; but I think the translation I have given is the better reading.

20

Feb. 14. This verse was written by the poet Shūsen in honour of his dead lord and master, who was particularly devoted to plum blossoms.

21

Feb. 15. *Tsuki-noborite* means 'to rise up', like clouds of incense, which 'put a hat on the moon', in other words, a halo.

22

Feb. 19, 20. Camellias, like willows, are considered to be goblin trees, whose spirits walk abroad at night. They

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bodied in your peaceful garden?' Bashō replied, 'The large plants represent great thoughts, and the smaller plants stand for ignoble thoughts.' The priest then entered and asked, 'How have you been employing yourself recently?' Bashō answered, 'The heavy rain has washed away the green moss.' (The purport of this reply is not very plain, unless he meant that the lapse of years had washed away his youth and his ability to do very much.) The priest again asked, 'Where was the rain before it fell? Where was the green moss before it grew, according to Buddhist teaching?' And just then, through the little circular window the hush was broken by the splash of a frog jumping into the pond; and Bashō composed the last two lines of the verse, which mean, 'the splash of the water, as a frog takes a flying leap'; his meaning evidently being, that the only suitable reply to the priest's question lay in silent meditation, which was broken by the frog's splash. The priest praised the sentiment very highly, and was so pleased that he presented Bashō with his priest's baton (*gyō*). But the first line of five syllables had still to be composed, and several students sitting in the room made different suggestions. Sampū suggested '*Tōi yami no*', 'In the dusk of evening'; Randan thought of '*Sabishisa ni*', 'In the calm of solitude'; and Kikaku proposed '*Yamabuki*', 'A yellow rose (is as short-lived as, &c.)', meaning to suggest the Buddhist idea, that colour is nothing, and nothing is colour; or as we say, beauty is only skin deep. Bashō after deep thought said, 'Your ideas are all good, especially Kikaku's, but they are not in harmony with the rest of the verse; I think a better line would be "*Furu ike ya*" "An ancient pond"; and the others at once admitted that it gave a finish of perfection to the verse.

26

Mar. 12. Temple bells in Japan, or at all events the large ones, are generally hung under a separate roof of their own, and are struck by a sort of battering-ram which is hung by

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Q

drop their blossoms whole, with a thud, instead of scattering their petals like most other flowers; and, as this is reminiscent of human heads falling, they are considered very unlucky, and should never be used for decoration inside the house. A red camellia is particularly unfortunate.

23

Feb. 22. *Mida* is a contraction for the Buddha Amida, the personification of boundless light and wisdom. The well-known Great Buddha at Kamakura is Amida, and his image is generally to be recognized by the wisdom spot in the middle of the forehead, the halo behind the whole body, which sits upon a lotus, and the peculiar position of the hands lying in the lap.

24

Feb. 25. Or perhaps a more correct reading would be, 'The plum blossoms of my youth have changed into the willow-tree of old age, now that I am about to enter Nirvana.'

25

Mar. 7. This is perhaps the best known *haikai* verse that was ever written, and it is supposed to illustrate the ideal of Zen Buddhism, silent meditation. The compiler of *Hokku Tebōdoki* gives an account of how the verse came to be written, which runs somewhat as follows:—Bashō lived in the Fukagawa district of Yedo (Tōkyō), where his students built him a little house and supported him. There was a garden attached to the house, containing a pond, and it was laid out to represent a deep Buddhist idea. The laying-out of gardens in Japan is a very advanced art, the minutest details are carefully studied, and gardens are often designed to represent some abstract idea, such as filial piety or pureness of heart. One day the priest Bukō, a clever sage and a Zen Buddhist, came with a friend, Rokuso Gobe, to pay Bashō a visit. Rokuso was the first to enter the house, and after a few polite preliminaries asked, 'What is the Buddhist idea em-

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## NOTES

ropes. There are many stories told about bells. Lafcadio Hearn relates that the great bell, cast by order of the Chinese Emperor Yong Lo of the Ming Dynasty, owed its beautiful tone and mournful echoing hum to the soul of Ko-NGai, the daughter of the master bell-founder, who leaped into the molten metal in order to save her father from the wrath of the Emperor, as all his previous attempts to cast the great bell had ended in failure.

27

Mar. 14, 15. *Hibari*, a skylark, is written ideographically with two characters, which mean 'the sparrow of the clouds'; i. e. the bird that is as common in the clouds as the sparrow is lower down. This is an instance of the cruel difficulties that beset the student of Japanese. The characters according to their ordinary pronunciation would be '*kumo-suzume*' (Japanese) or '*un-jaku*' (Chinese), but when in conjunction they are pronounced '*hibari*'. It is exactly as if we wrote c-l-o-u-d-s-p-a-r-r-o-w, and pronounced it 'lark'!

28

Mar. 16. *Uguisu*, though often translated 'nightingale', is really the *cestris cantans* or bush warbler. It is said to sing 'Hok-ke-kyō', which is the name of the Buddhist bible, and it is therefore considered a very holy bird.

29

Mar. 17. It is related that the Chinese Emperor Ming Hwang, about whom so many stories are told, was a great admirer of cherry blossoms. And on one occasion, when the cherry-trees were later than usual in flowering, he gave orders for the great bell to be struck and drums to be beaten, to remind them of their duty. *Higan sakura* is a species of cherry which flowers before the other kinds.

30

Mar. 25. The translation gives the meaning of the verse

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## NOTES

as printed; but *chō ebō tomare* by themselves mean, 'Butterfly, pray alight!' a characteristic touch of Sōin's.

31

Mar. 29. The compiler of *Haiku Ichiman* adds a note to the effect that this beautiful little verse by Bashō well represents the poet himself pursuing his solitary way through the world.

32

Mar. 31. Japan, being a country of rice-fields, which at certain times require to be flooded with water, produces great numbers of frogs.

33

Apr. 3. Yoshino is not far from Nara in the Province of Yamato. For 1,500 years the Japanese Emperors have given garden parties in cherry-blossom time, and Hideyoshi once gave a party on the hills of Yoshino to 10,000 people. Bashō is reported to have said that this was the best *haikai* verse ever written.

34

Apr. 9. I copy this verse from Lafcadio Hearn's *In Ghostly Japan*. He does not give the name of the composer, and I have not seen the verse quoted elsewhere; but I could not resist the temptation to include it, as it gives such a charming little sketch.

35

Apr. 22. This verse was composed by a young Japanese student on board ship, while on his way to England.

36

Apr. 26. This little *jeu d'esprit* is translated almost word for word.

37

Apr. 28. *Kataru*, here, can mean either (the butterflies upon the moor) 'say that', or 'cheat me into thinking that'

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(the spring seems to be going). There are two verbs pronounced *katara*, written with different ideographic characters; but in the original the word is written in phonetics only, thus leaving one to understand either meaning.

38

May. 5. Notice the second line, *Na nari hana nari* (both name and flower). The *Bijinsō* is the corn-poppy; but translated literally it means 'the beautiful lady-grass (or plant)'.

39

May 7. This verse was written by Bashō, when he was on one of his pilgrimages, and had come to an old ruined castle that had belonged to the Minamoto clan on the site of the great battlefield of Takatate in Michinoku. His intention was to contrast the peaceful scene of the waving summer grass which he found with the bustling camp life and slaughter of battle in the past.

40

May 8, 9. *Kuwam Butsu*, literally 'the washing (or sprinkling) of Buddha', is the *fête* commemorating his birth. It is the custom on the eighth day of the fourth month (o. c.) to place a small image of Buddha in a basin containing *amacha* (sweet tea), and the worshippers take up a ladleful and pour it over the image. The second verse refers to an image of Buddha, standing upon a lotus, with one hand pointing up to heaven, and the other down to earth. It is related that after his birth he assumed this attitude, and exclaimed, 'I, the only most exalted one'. *Hanjinono* means a symbol, mystery, or riddle; and although this attitude was familiar enough, the meaning of it might well be a mystery to an uneducated Japanese.

41

May 10. *Hotoogirisu* is not our cuckoo, but the *cuculus poliocephalus*. It is a weird kind of bird, supposed to sing only at night, and is seldom or never seen. It is said to

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come from the Spirit Land, across the Mountains of Shide, to tell the farmers when to plant their rice; and for this reason the name is generally written with two ideographic characters which mean 'the time bird'. It is supposed to call 'bo-to-to-gi-su' all night long, till quite exhausted it hangs head downwards from the branch with bloodshot eyes. Endless verses are written about this mysterious bird.

42

May 20. Most cherry-trees flower before the leaves appear; but the *yama zakura*, mountain or wild cherry, produces its leaves first. And this gives rise to a rather characteristic Japanese play upon words. The word pronounced *ha* means either 'leaves' or 'teeth'; and *kana* means either 'blossoms' or 'noses'. So that a person, the lower part of whose face projects, is sometimes called a *yama zakura*, because his teeth (or leaves) come before his nose (or blossoms).

43

May 26. In Japan a rose is looked upon as not much more than a thorny bush, and comparatively few verses are written about it. This translation is not very literal; it really reads, 'No rose can mind being stabbed by the dew.'

44

June 3. This verse was composed on seeing a poet in tears, who had been unsuccessful in a poetical contest.

45

June 5. *Mo umi*, green plum, is a species of plum which has white flowers tinged with green; but there is also a sly allusion in the verse to the fondness of children for green, unripe plums.

46

June 8. *Hime yuri*, literally 'Princess Lily', is the *lilium callosum*.

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June 10. *Nadeshiko* is the pink, *dianthus superbus*, but the word really means 'Child comforter'; so that this verse may also be a request to the breeze to bring the perfume of the pines to hush a crying babe.

June 16. The first line does not scan correctly, an instance of poetic licence. *Soyo-soyo* is supposed to represent the soft rustling of the breeze.

June 17-18. Rice is sown on the 88th day from the beginning of spring (o. c.), and is planted out in the heavy rains of early summer. The paddy-fields need a great deal of water, and are surrounded by a bank or dyke, so that they can be flooded and the water drained off by sluices to other fields when required. The farm girls with their bare legs and wide straw hats sing and gossip together as they work, and in the first verse the poet wishes the muddy water were clear, so that it might reflect the beautiful faces of the girls. The compiler of the *Haiku Ichiman*, from which this verse is taken, rather ungallantly adds a note, 'What! For farm girls!'

June 19. The point of this verse is a rather clumsy pun. *Nemu* (mimosa) being almost the same as *newu* (sleepless); the suggestion being, that the beauty or perhaps the perfume of the mimosa keeps the birds awake after their usual time for going to sleep.

June 21, 22. Cormorant fishing is still carried on in various parts of Japan, chiefly on the River Nagara in the Province of Owari. The fishing is all done at night by the help of flaming torches, which attract the fish to the boat, and the cormorants are then sent in after them.

June 23. *Sarunberi*, 'the tree that would make a monkey slip,' is the *lagerstroemia indica*, or crape myrtle. It sometimes goes by the name of *hyaku-jikkō*.

June 24. I have taken this verse by the old poetess Chiyo from Lafcadio Hearn's *In Ghostly Japan*, where he explains the circumstances under which it was written. Chiyo was an acknowledged adept at the 17-syllable metre, and one day she was challenged to write a verse embodying three such unpoetical ideas as a square, triangle, and circle; and she at once produced this. She imagines herself in bed, on a summer night, looking up at the square of the mosquito net overhead. She unties one corner, which drops down, leaving a triangular space, through which she can see the circular moon!

June 28. The word *matsu* here has a double meaning, and must be understood twice. As a noun it means 'a pine-tree,' and as a verb it means 'to long for, to desire exceedingly.' *Ha goromo* is a feather robe, which the *temnin*, or angels wear. The whole verse has reference to one of the old Nō Dramas, which recounts how an angel came down one day from the moon to the shore at Mio on the Gulf of Suruga, and hung up her feather robe on a pine-tree, while she went off to climb Mount Fuji. A fisherman found the dress and refused to give it up, until she promised to perform a heavenly dance for him on the sand; which she did, and then flew back to her home in the moon. The whole drama will be found translated by Prof. Chamberlain in *Classical Poetry of the Japanese*. The present verse means, that a bird in the uncomfortable season of moulting must wish it could find a new dress of feathers hanging on a pine-tree branch, as the fisherman did.

## NOTES

55

July 1. *Misogi* is the Shintō rite of purification by bathing or sprinkling; it was often performed after some wrong-doing, contact with a dead body or other defilement.

56

July 6. In Japan the mothers carry their babies tied on to their backs.

57

July 8. *Zoro-zoro* is supposed to represent the rustling sound of a lady's dress.

58

July 9, 10. A parasol naturally suggests a young lady, and the contrast in the second verse is between her youth and the falling pine-needles; the pine being a symbol of long life and old age. There is also a double meaning in *furu*, which in the first line means 'falling', and *furu* in the next line means 'old (i. e. dead) leaves'.

59

July 13-16. The lotus is the sacred flower of Buddhism, and is found continually in Buddhist art; its white purity growing out of stagnant muddy water symbolizing the Buddhist doctrine in the midst of a sinful world. Dew being the very essence of purity, 'the dew upon the lotus' is a Buddhist expression for perfect purity. *Bô* in the third verse means a very small and lonely shrine, or almost a hermit's hut, rather than a temple as I have translated it.

60

July 17-20. There are many pretty stories in Japan about fireflies. One relates that they are the ghosts of the warriors who fought in the great battle between the Genji and Heike clans on the banks of the Uji River; and therefore all caged fireflies should be let free on the anniversary of the battle. Fireflies are often let loose in the garden at an evening entertainment to amuse the guests, who chase them, until the

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## NOTES

fireflies hide themselves in the moonbeams. And it is related that Hotaru Himé, the daughter of the Firefly King, was once courted by a black bug, a scarlet dragon-fly, a gold beetle, and a hawk moth. She commanded each of them in turn to fetch her a present of fire before she would consent to wed, and had they each tried to get it from lamps and candles, and had their wings burnt. So now, when many dead bodies of insects are found in the morning round the temple lamps, the priests say, 'Princess Hotaru had many lovers last night.'

61

July 24. I have taken rather a liberty with this verse; *nokoru*, meaning 'the remains', or 'what is left over', should go with *atsusa* (summer hot weather), and not with *tamashii* (heart or spirit), as I have taken it. *Nokoru atsusa* is a term for what we call Indian summer. The *Kamo gawa* (Wild Duck River) is near Kyôto, the ancient capital city.

62

July 26. Meaning that the shower of tears should surely bring a shower of rain.

63

July 28. *Higurashi* is a cicada or locust of a green colour, which sings only at dawn and sunset. But the same sound, written with different characters, would mean 'the sun has set', and both meanings are to be understood here.

64

July 29. I take this verse from Sir Edwin Arnold's *Sea and Lands*, where it is explained that the poetess Chiyo went out one morning to draw water from her well, and found that during the night a tendril of convolvulus had twisted itself round the bucket rope. She could not find it in her heart to disturb it, and so composed this dainty little verse, and then went off to borrow water from a neighbour.

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July 30. This was the death-song of *Aralida Moriake*, who died in A.D. 1549. *Aragao* (convolulus) means 'the face of the morning', or, as we call it, the morning glory. He, Moriake means that his life now drawing to a close is as short as that of a convolulus, which dies before evening. He, however, lived to 77 years of age! One of the *Nô* Dramas tells that the convolulus, being jealous of the longer life of other flowers, was unable to enter Nirvana. But a priest appeared and told her that, in reality, time is nothing, and a moment is eternity, and finally it all ends satisfactorily.

Aug. 4. *Suzumushi*, literally 'bell insect', is a tiny insect, whose song is said to sound like the ringing of the little silvery bells used at a Shintô service. It is highly valued and often kept in a little cage, as we keep song-birds.

Aug. 5. On the 13th to the 15th days of the 7th month (o. c.) was celebrated *Bon Matsuri*, or *Tama Matsuri*, sometimes called by foreigners 'The Feast of Lanterns'. During these days it is believed that the Spirits of the Dead return to their former homes upon earth; the grave-stones in the cemeteries are decorated with flowers and hung with paper lanterns, which are lit at night, and special offerings and prayers are made before the memorial tablets on the *tama dana*. The *tama dana*, shelf of the Spirits, or family altar, is placed in the best room in the house about six feet above the floor, and on it is set a little *miya* (Shintô shrine), made of pure white hinoki wood without metal nails or ornament, containing the tablets, which bear the names of those members of the family who have died. Tea, rice, and flowers are offered daily, in unglazed cups and basins with tiny chopsticks complete, and a lamp is kept burning there all night. In front of the *miya* hangs the sacred rope of rice-straw (*shimenawa*), which has a special significance to Shintôists.

Aug. 6, 7. These two verses refer to the Festival of Tanabata, which was kept on the 7th evening of the 7th month (o. c.); though nowadays it is observed only in villages and country places. According to the legend, Tanabata was a maiden who dwelt in the star *Vega* in the constellation of *Lyra*, and who sat all day at her loom on the east side of the River of Heaven (Milky Way) employed in weaving robes for the use of the Gods. Hikoboshi was a herd-boy (the constellation of *Aquila*), who drove his oxen on the other side of the river. One day the Gods took pity on Tanabata, and gave her in marriage to the herd-boy; but, finding that their supply of cloth began to run short, Hikoboshi was only allowed to visit his bride once a year, on the 7th night of the 7th month. Even that visit is uncertain; for if the weather is bad the river rises and he cannot cross; rain on that night is called *namida no ame* (the rain of tears), and if a mist shows on the Milky Way it is said to be the spray from the ears of the herd-boy as he rows across. Another account says that the magpies, flying with one wing only, form a bridge for Hikoboshi to cross over. The festival has been celebrated for 1,150 years in Japan; it is the custom to write verses with ink made from freshly gathered dew upon coloured papers, which are then fixed to bamboos and set up on the roofs of the houses. The ladies of the court of the Chinese Emperor Ming Hwang used to catch spiders on this night, and shut them up in incense-boxes. If they had spun a web before daybreak it was considered a sign of coming good fortune.

Aug. 9, 10. When a member of the family goes away on a journey, offerings of rice and tea are often placed for him, the cups and basins being covered over with lids. If, on lifting them later on, drops of dew show inside the lids, all is well; but if the latter are dry it shows that the absent one is dead, for his Spirit has returned to consume the essence of the



offering. The second verse may mean that the Spirit of some very aged ancestor has been present at the family altar; or it may perhaps merely mean that, as it is the duty of the oldest member of the family to attend to the *tama dāna*, he or she may have left a hair there when making the offerings.

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Aug. 11, 12. *Mukae kane* and *mukae-bi* are the welcoming bell and light, to guide and welcome the Spirits that come back to their earthly home on *Bon Matsuri*, the 13th night of the 7th month (o.c.). The welcome light takes the form of bonfires along the shore, or lanterns and pine torches for those who live inland. The second verse is more correctly, 'Until the time for sweeping the door-step, the lights of welcome should be kept burning.'

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Aug. 13. *Kandō* is a son, who for some wrong-doing has been disinherited and turned out of the family, and so is not recognized at *Bon Matsuri*. But, in spite of that, his mother will steal away at night to some secluded spot, and carry out the full rites and ceremonies in his honour.

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Aug. 14. *Bon odori* is a sacred dance performed at *Bon Matsuri* by women and girls, which dates from the very earliest times. It is very different from our idea of a dance, consisting of swaying and posturing with soft hand-clapping, all done in time with the music. It is danced at night by white-robed girls, who come forth from the cemeteries carrying lanterns, and relays of fresh dancers keep it up till the early morning bell rings out.

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Aug. 15-19. *Okuri-bi* are the farewell lights lit on the 15th night of the 7th month (o.c.) to bid good-bye to the visiting Spirits, who then return to their own place. On the coast, especially at Nagasaki, model boats (*shoryōbune*), made

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of straw, wood, or paper, were launched, each containing a tablet with the Spirit's name, offerings of food and drink, burning incense, and a lamp, which was also called *okuri-bi*; each was fitted with a sail bearing the Spirit's name, and the boats were allowed to drift out to sea. Lafcadio Hearn's *In Ghostly Japan* describes this farewell ceremony, as he saw it at Yaizu; but in that instance the boats were merely square pieces of wood, about ten inches square, a stick at each corner served to hold up the paper sides, and inside a lighted candle was placed; they were painted in blue, yellow, red, white, and black, symbolizing ether, wind, fire, water, and earth. The open sea or flowing water of any kind is associated with the home of the Spirits, and on the last night of the *Bon*, when the Spirits are returning, the sea is always rough. Boats do not venture out on that night, if they can avoid it, for the Spirits crowd round and call out for a bucket to be thrown over to them. They must not be refused; but it is wiser first to knock the bottom out, or they will use the bucket to fill and sink the ship.

## 74

Aug. 17. Another reading of this verse is *goku itau*, instead of *naniyara*, in the second line, which would alter it to:—

'The dawn appears once more,  
The last faint Spirit lamp is out,  
*Bon Matsuri* is o'er.'

## 75

Aug. 21, 22. *Segaki* is a special service, when masses are said and offerings made in honour of the Spirits of those who have no living relatives to do it for them. It is therefore a particularly charitable and meritorious thing to do. *Segaki* means 'feeding the hungry Spirits', for the Spirits who have no regular daily offerings made to them suffer great hunger. One of the eight Buddhist bells is *Gakidō*, or 'the place of the hungry Spirits'.

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Aug. 24, 31. Dragon-flies are thought to be the horses on which the Spirits of the Dead ride, and nobody is allowed to molest them at *Bon Matsuri*.

Aug. 25-29. *Taka tōrō* is a paper lantern, hung up at the top of an upright stick or post. A lamp is typical of human life, and is considered a rather weird and ghost-like thing. Cf. the proverb, *Inachi wa fūzen no tomoshibi*, 'life is the flame of a lamp flickering in the wind.'

Sept. 1. *Haruki*, 'the leaf month,' when the leaves fall, is a poetic name for the 8th month (o. c.), corresponding to September.

Sept. 2. *Trukutsuku-bōshi* is a kind of locust or cicada much esteemed for its song; but *bōshi* or *bōshi* is the name for a Buddhist priest, and both words are to be understood here.

Sept. 3. Saga was a wild and lonely moor, not far from Kyōto, the capital. In Japan many kinds of insects are valued for their musical voices, and are kept in tiny cages; but in their wild state they have to take their chance, with other insects, of being caught by the birds. *Karasu*, generally translated 'crow', is the *corvus japonicus*, a bigger bird than our crow, with a different cry and different habits.

Sept. 4-6. *Hagi* is the *leptodexa bicolor*.

Sept. 5, 9. *Tarogare* means 'Who is it?', and is used for the dim twilight, when one can hardly distinguish a passer-by, and asks who it is. Here it means twilight, and also suggests

that the weasel in the clover is wondering who Buson is. The Kōdaiji is a famous Zen Buddhist temple at Kyōto, containing many relics of Hideyoshi.

Sept. 13. *Izayoi* means to hesitate, and *izayoi* is a poetic name for the 16th night of the lunar month, when the moon appears to hesitate in rising.

Sept. 14. This is a well-known and very beautiful verse by Bashō's disciple, Kikaku. *Tatami* are the straw mats, 6 feet by 3 feet, which form the floor of a Japanese house; *mai getsu* means the full moon.

Sept. 20. This verse is intended to convey a picture of clouds driving across the face of the moon. When a cloud approaches, the moon seems to float into it (*tadayoi*), like a boat; and when the cloud passes away, the moon is supposed to be driving it off (*harai*).

Sept. 28. *Tobi-tengu* means to pass on a cry from one to another.

Sept. 29. *Seishi*, meaning omnipotent, is an epithet generally applied to Buddha. A more literal translation is, 'How sad it is to hear that the present month (of autumn) is all-powerful!'

Oct. 8. Bashō's special school of poetry was founded upon this verse. It will be noticed that the second line is too long, and some people read *u* (cormorant) instead of *karasu* (crow), which would make the metre correct; but a cormorant being a water bird is obviously out of place on a tree, and would quite spoil the verse.



Oct. 9. Matsushima, or the island of pine-trees, is in the Inland Sea, and is one of the three famous beautiful places of Japan. It has always been a specially sacred spot, and nobody is ever allowed to be born or to die there.

Oct. 16. *Maru-ki* means a round chubby little baby, and is the same word as *Maru*, which is always added to the names of ships in the Japanese Mercantile Marine. In the old days, when the Japanese owned few steamships, each one was looked upon as a member of the family, in fact as a new very big baby, and was accordingly dubbed *Maru*, 'round and chubby.'

Oct. 24. Fuji is a sacred mountain, inhabited by Ko No Hana Saku ya Hime, 'the princess who makes the flowers blossom,' and a pilgrimage to its summit is specially meritorious. There are several temples at the top, which are only open in summer time, and it is said that stones and pebbles rolled down by the feet of pilgrims are miraculously restored the next night to their original position; so that the height of the mountain never grows less. In ancient times no woman was ever allowed to make the ascent; but Lady Parkes reached the summit in October, 1867, and since then several ladies have done the same. The height is 12,365 feet, and the shape is an almost perfect cone, resembling, as the Japanese say, an inverted fan in the sky.

Oct. 26. Mount Asama, in the Province of Shinshū, is 8,130 feet high, and is the largest active volcano in Japan. This verse no doubt refers to stones blown up by eruptions, which constantly take place.

Nov. 3. These are of course symbolical; the pine stands for long life, the maple for the beauty of autumn, and the 16-petal

*chrysanthemum* is the Imperial crest. The reigning Emperor, Mutsuhito, was born Nov. 3, 1852, and ascended the throne in 1867.

Nov. 4, 5. Tea plants grow to 3 or 4 feet high, and have small white blossoms and faint perfume. The leaves are picked about the end of April or early in May, and again generally in June or July; the plants flower in early winter, when there is often warm, mild weather. There is a legend that Daruma, the Buddhist saint and the founder of the Zen sect, who sat in silent meditation for so long that his legs rotted away, found great difficulty in keeping himself awake. Finally one day, in spite of his efforts, he could not avoid dropping off to sleep; but on awaking he was so angry at his own weakness that he cut off his eyelids and threw them on the ground, thus preventing himself for ever after from shutting his eyes. The next day the eyelids had grown into two tea bushes with eyelid-shaped leaves; and this was the origin of the plant, which gives all who partake of it before going to bed a sleepless night.

Nov. 8. Foxes in Japan are supernatural and often very mischievous animals. They have a dangerous power of turning themselves into beautiful young women; but the way to detect them is to get them near to a pool of water, for the water will only reflect them as foxes. There is a queer story told in *Things Japanese* of a fox, which turned itself into a phantom railway-train as recently as 1889. The fox is the servant of Inari, the God of the Rice-fields, and stone images of foxes are often seen about the country, sometimes wearing coloured cloth bibs as votive offerings.

Nov. 22, 23. The Japanese say that a hawk, after hunting all day, will catch a small bird and carry it off to his nest, holding it in his claws all night as a protection against cold feet;



hence the name *nukune dori*, which means 'the warming bird'. In the morning the bird is allowed its freedom, and the hawk shows his gratitude by taking care not to hunt that day in the direction in which it flew.

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Nov. 25, 26. In the 10th month (o.c.) all the eight million Shintō Deities assemble from all parts of the country, and go off to their ancestral home of Izumo; all except Ebisu, the God of Wealth and Protector of Markets, for he is deaf and cannot hear the summons. The 10th month is therefore often called *Kaminasuki*, the godless month, and it is considered useless to offer any prayers then.

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Nov. 27. This verse is supposed to be written by a dying man, who has neither wife nor children left to look after him. He hears a cry out in the night, and half hopes it is they, but finds it is only a crow.

99

Nov. 28. Bashō died in Ōsaka, as already related. In this, his last verse, he pictures himself as still wandering on a solitary pilgrimage, and, feeling ill while crossing a desolate moor, he seeks the house of some charitable friend who will take him in.

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Dec. 4. *Tomu* is a contraction for *tomuru* (to stop), and is almost a kind of rhyme with *tomoru* (to burn).

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Dec. 5. *Higasbi yama* are a low-lying range of hills east of Kyōto, the ancient capital. The verse gives a good idea of warmth and comfort in winter.

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Dec. 9. The poet had just lost his wife, and compares himself to a poor lonely crow flying across a desolate moor.

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Dec. 10. This may represent nothing more than a picture; but probably, like so many other *haikai*, it has a symbolical meaning also.

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Dec. 12. *Mizu-gusa* means water-weed; but it may also be a contraction for *mizukusabi*, which means insipid (lit. 'smelling of water'). So that the verse also means, that even if snowflakes had a scent, it would be only a very watery one.

105

Dec. 16. Pilgrims wear straw rain-coats, big mushroom straw hats, white leggings, and carry a stick. The Nichiren sect of Buddhists go the *sengaji mairi*, or pilgrimage to 1,000 temples, a meritorious act which takes most of a lifetime and involves seeing the whole of Japan.

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Dec. 17. This represents the vigour of manhood, bravely bearing up against trouble.

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Dec. 19. *Kamize* is a word used in connexion with play actors. Before the performance begins the players come forward and make a formal bow to the audience, by way of asking for their kind appreciation.

108

Dec. 20. There is a play here upon the word *yuki*, used three times. The first twice mean 'snow', and the last, in conjunction with *dakora*, means 'a place to go to'. Literally it runs:—

'Oh, what a fall of snow!  
Alas! there is no place to go  
To see the lovely snow.'

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Dec. 25. This verse reminds one of Rōraishi, one of the twenty-four Chinese paragons of filial virtue. It is recorded that Rōraishi, when 70 years of age, still used to dress in bright colours and play about upon the floor, in order to delude his old parents of over 90 years of age into thinking that they were not really so very old after all. He also pretended one day to slip and fall while carrying a pail of water, and began to cry at the slop he had made.

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Dec. 28. *Toshi wasure* was an entertainment given at the close of the year, by way of forgetting and wiping out the past year's misfortunes.

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Dec. 29. The *Haiku Ichiman* adds a note to this : ' One year is a year of refinement and elegance, another is a year of greed and selfishness ; who can say which agrees best with the will of heaven ! '



